

World

LATIN AMERICAN

Agenda

2015

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This year we remind you...

We put the accent on vision, on attitude, on awareness, on education... Obviously, we aim at practice. However our “charisma” is to provoke the transformations of awareness necessary so that radically new practices might arise from another systemic vision and not just reforms or patches. We want to ally ourselves with all those who search for that transformation of conscience. We are at its service. This Agenda wants to be, as always and even more than at other times, a box of materials and tools for popular education.

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Contents

Introduction

Presentation of the Agenda , José María VIGIL, Panamá, Panamá	8
Introduction , Pedro CASALDÁLIGA & José Maria VIGIL, São Félix do Araguaia, MG, Brazil.....	10
Martyrology Anniversaries of 2015	12
Prizes and Contests. Premios y Concursos (Spanish)	14

I. SEEING

Sources of Human Rights Information , José Manuel FAJARDO SALINAS, San Pedro Sula, Honduras	20
Latin America: the Highest Rate of Femicide in the World	39

II. JUDGING / DREAMING

Universal Declaration of Human Rights , United Nations, 1948	24
Juridical Instruments on Women's Rights , Carmen BALODANO, Managua, Nicaragua	26
Human Rights: Brief Historical Development , Gabriela BARRIOS, Mexico DF, Mexico.....	28
The bases of Law , Alfredo GONÇALVES, São Paulo, SP, Brazil	30
Citizenship: the right to have rights , Gustavo LACERDA, Belo Horizonte, MG, Brazil.....	32
Universality of Human Rights , Jordi COROMINAS, Sant Julià de Lòria, Andorra.....	34
Human Rights: New Paradigm for Politics , Michael RAMMINGER, München, Germany	36
Human Rights of Women , Elsa TAMEZ, Medellín, Colombia	38
The Rights of Nature. When words fall short , David MOLINEAUX, Santiago de Chile	40
Amos and the Human Rights in the Bible , Ariel ÁLVAREZ VALDÉS, Santiago del Estero, Argentina	42
What Can Buddhism Contribute to the Social Justice? , David LOY, Boulder, CO, USA	44
2015 UN International Year of Soils and Light and Light-based Technologies	47
Human Rights and the Market , Patrus ANANIAS DE SOUZA, Belo Horizonte, MG, Brazil.....	66
Rights of The Earth, Human Duties , Afonso MURAD, Belo Horizonte, MG, Brazil	78
The Rights of the Amazon Region , Sandro GALLAZZI, Macapá, AP, Brazil	90
Human Rights of the Indigenous People , Paulo SUESS, São Paulo, SP, Brazil.....	102
We All Have the Same Right to the Land , João Pedro STÉDILE, São Paulo, SP, Brazil.....	116
Human Rights and «historic remembrance» , Eduardo DE LA SERNA, Quilmes, Argentina	128
Human Rights and Spirituality , Marcelo BARROS, Recife, BA, Brazil.....	142
Climate Change and Human Rights , Ivo POLETTTO, Goiânia, GO, Brazil	154

Hot points

Cattle and Hunger in the Consumer Society , Vânia Márcia DAMASCENO NOGUEIRA, Brasília, DF, Brazil	166
The Right To Migrate. My testimony , Yolanda CHÁVEZ, Los Ángeles CA, USA.....	180
Release Oscar López Rivera From Prison, Now! , José Nazario DE LA ROSA, Caguas, Puerto Rico.....	192
2020 will be too late. Paris 2015: Decisive summit in climate change	241

III. TAKING ACTION

The Right to Dream/Practice Alternatives , Sergio FERRARI, Berna, Suiza – Buenos Aires, Argentina ...	210
Causes for the on-going erosion of our human rights , Leonardo BOFF, Petrópolis, RJ, Brazil.....	212
Decolonial Thought and Human Rights , Héctor LAPORTA, Lima, Perú - New York, USA.....	213
Human Rights: A Tool in Defence of The Poor , Popular Office Boris Vega, CEBs & Frater, Masaya, Nicaragua...	214
Good Drinking Water - Latinamerica's human right - now! , Víctor VIÑUALES, Zaragoza, Spain.....	216
Mining and violations of human rights , Dário BOSSI e Danilo CHAMMAS, Açailândia, MA, Brazil	218
Human Rights Centers: Mission and Service , Miguel CONCHA MALO, México DF, Mexico.....	220
Religions and human rights: historical litigation , Juan José TAMAYO, Madrid, Spain	222
Human Rights within the Church Itself , Armando LAMPE, Aruba, Antillas	224
The Right to Live in Peace , Elías RUIZ VIRTUS, San Pedro Sula, Honduras.....	226
Pedagogical Challenges to the Human Rights , Frei BETTO, São Paulo, SP, Brazil.....	228
Right to Education and Culture , José MUJICA, Montevideo, Uruguay	231
Human Rights Yesterday and Today , Adolfo PÉREZ ESQUIVEL, Buenos Aires, Argentina	232
Human Rights in the Church , <i>Suggested task</i>	233
Men and Women: equal rights according to the Gospel? , Maria VON HOESEL, Kingston, Jamaica	234
Human Rights in the classroom , Martín VALMASEDA, Cobán, Guatemala	236

Contest Winners (in Spanish)

Latin American Short Story: La canción del negro Alí , Richard Joel RICO PÉREZ, Acarigua, Venezuela	238
Neobiblical Page: Promesas de esperanza para nuestra nación , Antonio MEDINA, El Salvador.....	240
Gender Perspective: Feminismo, peregrinaje hacia la liberación , Maite PÉREZ MILLET, Santiago de Cuba	242

Closing

Koinonia Services	225
«Tiempo Axial» Series	243
Who's Who	244
Notes	246-256

Holistic Vision of our World-wide Latin American Agenda 2015

HUMAN RIGHTS! ... A dream, a Cause that is Utopia, conscience that has been raised and needs aid to keep spreading. It's going to be 70 years since proclaiming THEIR Declaration of Universal-ity, and tasks are still pending, conscience to raise, a program to be carried out, propagation of THEIR education.

Human rights belong to every man and women, -- rights that can not be denied to people, especially the poor. If at one time the Human Rights theme was considered somewhat bourgeois, today we are reclaiming with all its wide-spread coverage through various epochs -- a real revolution.

Of course in our treatment, as always we follow the Latin-American triplet method: SEE -> JUDGE -> ACT.

We begin with "SEE" by reviewing the article "Sources of Human Rights Information," to guide our search and lay out a panorama of more generalized causes, which can be fleshed-out with individual reports of local human rights situations.

In order to "JUDGE" the situation, be it either general or local, we look first to the iconic Universal Declaration, and complementary legal instruments, such as those referring to women. And to continue the process, we present the background reflections offered by our authors so they can

provide a basis for our discussion and reflection: the history of "right", its origin, its foundation, its ability to ground an alternative global political order, and as many specific questions as available space permits: the "rights" of nature, of animals; the Human Rights of women, indigenous peoples; the right to land, the rights to the Amazon Basin in Brazil; Human Rights and the market; all this without neglecting the biblical view of Human Rights and the possible contribution of Buddhism to the cause of Human Rights.

Three "hot spots" (meat consumption, the European economic crisis, and seeking the order of release from prison for Oscar López) make the transition to our final -> "ACT", where we try to suggest conclusions, point out paths, light up clues ... but finally it will be up to every person and every group or community to find the many others that are closer to home and applicable to their concrete situation.

Once again we have to say: we don't believe our Agenda will discover anything new when facing such broad and profoundly human issues. It continues in its own charismatic line: promoting changes in consciousness: helping to "renew our 'software'", to spread-wide new visions able to introduce new practices. It is "the productive capital of the poor":

Translation by Justiniano Liebl

THE AGENDA PLACES ALSO THESE RESOURCES AT YOUR DISPOSITION!

- The **information page and complementary materials** of the Agenda: latinoamericana.org/2014/info
Everything that didn't fit in this paper edition that is still offered by the Agenda for popular education work
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- The **«Tiempo Axial» Collection**: tiempoaxial.org and **«Servicios Koinonia»**: servicioskoinonia.org

a creative hope, a critical analysis, an ever present utopian courage, and a militancy that raises consciousness just as did our ever to be remembered martyred men and women struggling to build the Great Fatherland, our World ...

With this issue our Agenda reaches the age of 24 -- faithful, year after year, to meeting with the militants linked in spirit to the "Patria Grande" -- "The Global Homeland", working towards the "Patria Mayor". Next year we will celebrate our Silver Jubilee, with our continental love still as strong

as in our first year!

For that Jubilee Year we will again dedicate the Agenda, to one of our fundamental subjects: "Property and Inequality." It will be the same Utopia as always guiding us; it will just be making our Causes more concrete and their obstacles which vary from year to year. And it's probably the current Inequality involved in the situation of property, that may be one of today's most glaring problems, if not the most urgent in Latin America and the World.

Brotherly/Sisterly yours,

José María VIGIL



Educational 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 so 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 favour of a greater volume of message. This also allows us to keep the price lower so the Agenda is more accessible.

Ecumenicism

The Agenda is aconfessional, and, above all, "macroecumenical." The world of common references, beliefs, values, and utopias among peoples and men and wom-

en of good will—which Christians call "the Reign"—is shared by all who are partners in this humble, serving, brotherly, and sisterly search.

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."

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 centres ensure the non-profit character of each edition.

In its central coordination, the Latin American Agenda, 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.

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, documents...

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



HUMAN RIGHTS: A PENDING (R)EVOLUTION

Perhaps, from the time when *homo* (man) and *mulier* (woman) became sapiens this Utopia began to be apprehended. However, for tens of thousands of years it was an impossible dream. For too long there was no other law than that of the jungle (or of the African savannah from which we came, the law of force, of a pyramidal and patriarchal society, in which the poor, slaves and others had to resign themselves to the cruel reality of having been born “inferior,” without rights or citizenship. As humanity, we have been backward for too long in our own absence of awareness of dignity.

However, a mysterious dynamic that operates at a deeper dimension, the same one that drew us out of the African savannahs and from the bands of hunters-gatherers, allowed its Utopia to be sensed by prophetic spirits and visionary minds. These have touched the hearts of the poor, of utopian militants, of a struggling people... Successive historical evolutions gradually brought forth a new awareness of humanity. It took thousands of years to eradicate slavery. Certainly, many religions were complicit with that institution in stark contrast with their deepest Utopia. Less than three centuries have passed since various revolutions have given us the rights of “citizenship.” We are no longer subjects, but rather human beings with full dignity, with the “right to have rights” (according to the formula that Hanna Arendt gave birth to with such suffering)... even though that citizenship is still quite limited, reserved to males, landowners, Whites....

Utopia has been recognized at the heart of humanity as a passionately humane society. It has stepped forward, lifting us up, leading us in the evolution of our own humanizing. New “generations of human rights” have appeared in the historic rhythm of the growth of our human consciousness. And we can well believe that there are other generations as well still to be uncovered. We have not yet arrived; we are journeying still and our journey is not ended.

But, today, what holds our attention is more the strategy for the application of rights already recognized. Filled with hope for other concrete applications of Utopia – in alternative economic and political systems – more than once in the past we thought that human rights was something already achieved, something perhaps “bourgeois” even, like the neo-liberal evolutions in which in fact those rights first saw light. The utopias that should be drawing out our commitment ought to be more advanced, more engaging. We can advance to the future utopia by many paths. There is not just one. Theory can trace a path and perhaps be brilliant in its conception. But practice is capricious – even contradictory and chaotic – and allows us to advance only where it permits, not where we put our energy as militants.

In this historic moment, no sort of social or economic revolution is within our grasp. But the Utopia of Human Rights is there, readily at hand, with all its various “generations:” those already realized and those still to come. It is a Utopia that does not have theoretical enemies, that spills out its presence wherever you look. And everyone accepts it. There is no “bourgeois” Utopia. The rights of the first generation that proclaimed them were bourgeois. The “inhabitants of the burghs are its main defenders. But various subsequent generations of human rights lead to many other new developments of the Utopia of human dignity; every imaginable right can be derived from this fundamental dignity and is implied in it. A full and achieved realization of human rights, all of them, would be equivalent to an integral revolution: democratic, socialist, feminist, popular, ecological... It would be the “topia” [place] of Utopia, the fulfilment of all our desires. That is why a renewed social awareness of these rights and their implementation in the corresponding juridical-social framework is something more revolutionarily effective than many of the socio-political struggles in other fields.

Of course, we have to include everyone; all humanity and also the non-human that also have their rights: the rights of animals, plants, nature, the environment and Mother Earth. We need to take the human away from the center of “human” rights in order to center them rather on ecology, to develop them... A fully achieved revolution of human rights would be the sum of all the utopias for which we have been struggling historically. Speaking in a revolutionary context, human rights are a valid path and perhaps the short cut most available to us. Without forgetting about or undervaluing other struggles—for they are all necessary! —we do want to call attention to the fact that human rights are a struggle that opens the way for all the others and deserves special attention. The people who are writing the articles in this edition of the Agenda present aspects of that path that are really and truly partial revolutions, practical ones that can be achieved through our militancy.

“Every right ... for everyone,” the Mexican *Zapatistas* said by way of an emblematic formulation of their total Utopia. As long as there are people whose human rights are not being met, we will feel, in this new evolutionary stage of our human consciousness, that we are also being neglected in our rights because “their rights” are also ours. “Their rights are ours.” We have to demand those “rights that are both theirs and ours” as a duty as much as a right.

This is an evolution already underway that we need to welcome, support and complete. And for our part, it is also a (r)evolution, that of human rights. We are not speaking of rights as understood in the 18th century, nor of those in the Declaration of 1948, but rather of that profound Utopia that transcends itself and is rediscovered, reinvented and (r)evolutionized by every generation.

The Agenda reminds us: this is our moment, the hour to change the world, a revolutionary moment to demand and to fully realize all our human rights: for everyone! Jesus himself would also do it in his Nazareth that is, at this point, globalized.

**PEDRO CASALDÁLIGA
AND JOSÉ MARÍA VIGIL**



2015 MARTYROLOGY ANNIVERSARIES

LATIN AMERICAN MARTYRS

1960: 55 Years

11.25: Assassination of the Mirabal sisters in Dominican Rep.

1965: 50 Years

04.21: Pedro Albizu Campos, tortured leader for the Independence of Puerto Rico died.

06.22: Arturo Mackinnon, Canadian missionary in Dominican Republic, assassinated for defending the poor.

1970: 45 Years

01.15: Leonel Rugama, falls during the revolutionary struggle against the Somoza dictatorship in Nicaragua.

10.08: Néstor Paz Zamora, college seminarian, martyr of the liberation struggles in Bolivia.

11.18: Gil Tablada, killed for opposing the hoarding of land, La Cruz, Costa Rica.

11.28: Nicolás Rodríguez, first priest killed in El Salvador, Martyr for the service to his brothers and sisters.

1975: 40 Years

01.04: José Patricio León «Pato», animator of the JEC and political activist, disappeared in Chile.

03.21: Carlos Dorniak, Salesian, killed in Bahía Blanca for libertarian education, martyr. Argentina.

06.25: Martyrs of Olancho: Iván Betancourt and Miguel «Casimiro», priests, and 7 Honduran farmers.

06.30: Dionisio Frías, peasant leader, martyr in the struggle for land in Dominican Republic.

08.01: Arlen Siu, student, 18 years old, martyr of the Nicaraguan revolution.

09.?: Nelio Rougier, Little brother of the Gospel, arrested in Cordoba and disappeared.

10.20: Raimundo Hermann, pastor among the Quechua Indians, martyr of the Bolivian peasants.

10.25: Wladimir Herzog, journalist, killed by the military dictatorship in São Paulo.

11.21: Slaughter of La Unión, Honduras, killing of peasants by mercenary landlords

12.15: Daniel Bombara, member of the JUC of Bahía Blanca, martyr of the committed college students in Argentina.

12.?: José Serapio Palacios, leader of the JOC El Palomar (Buenos Aires), kidnapped and disappeared.

1980: 35 Years

01.29: María Ercilia Martínez y Ana Coralía Martínez, students and catechists, martyrs, El Salvador.

01.31: Slaughter of 40 Quiche at the Spain Embassy in Guatemala.

03.22: Luis Espinal, priest and journalist, martyr of the

struggles of the Bolivian people.

03.24: Oscar Arnulfo Romero, «Saint Romero of America», Archbishop of San Salvador, prophet and martyr.

04.18: Elvira Hernández, 14 years old, Salvadorian catechist, gunned down while preparing a celebration.

04.19: Juana Tun, Vicente Menchú's wife and her son Patrocinio, catechists, martyrs of El Quiché.

04.20: Moisés Medrano, peasant leader, massacred along with over twenty companions.

04.20: Martyrs of the popular Indian organization, in Veracruz, México.

05.01: Conrado de la Cruz, priest, and Herlindo Cifuentes, catechist, killed, martyred in Guatemala.

05.05: Isaura Esperanza, «Chaguita», catechist, of the Legion of Mary, martyred in El Salvador.

05.12: Walter Voodeckers, Belgian missionary with poor peasant, martyred in Escuintla, Guatemala.

05.14: Juan Caccya Chipana, worker, activist, victim of the police repression in Perú.

05.29: Raimundo Ferreira Lima, Gringo, pastoral agent and union martyr, Conceição do Araguaia, Brasil.

06.04: José María Gran, missionary priest, and Domingo Batz, sacristan, martyrs in El Quiché, Guatemala.

06.06: José Ribeiro, leader of the Indian nation, Apuríña, murdered, Brasil.

06.09: Ismael Enrique Pineda and colleagues, of Caritas in San Salvador, missing in El Salvador.

06.14: Cosme Spessoto, Italian priest, pastor, martyr of charity in El Salvador.

07.10: Faustino Villanueva, serving the Indian Quiche people Guatemala, gunned down in his parish.

07.21: Wilson de Souza Pinheiro, union leader for the peasants killed in Brasília, AC, Brasil.

07.22: Jorge Oscar Adur, priest, Raúl Rodríguez and Carlos Di Pietro, seminarians, missing, Argentina.

07.25: José Othomaro Cáceres, seminarian, and 13 companions, martyrs in El Salvador.

07.28: Slaughter of 70 peasants in San Juan Cotzal, in Guatemala.

08.03: Slaughter of Bolivian miners in Caracoles, Bolivia, after a coup d'état: 500 dead.

08.15: José Francisco dos Santos, of Rural Union Workers in Correntes, PE, Brasil. Killed.

08.24: 17 leaders of the National Trade Union Confederation disappeared. Escuintla, Guatemala.

Translation by Josefa López

- 10.03: María Magdalena Enríquez, Baptist, martyr of the defense of the rights of the poor.
- 10.07: Manuel Antonio Reyes, pastor, martyr for his service to the poor in El Salvador.
- 10.25: Ramón Valladares, Secretary of the Commission on Human Rights in El Salvador, murdered.
- 11.05: Fanny Abanto, teacher leader, community activists in Lima, martyr of popular struggles.
- 11.10: Policiano Albeño López, Protestant pastor and Raúl Albeño Martínez, martyrs of justice, El Salvador.
- 11.12: Nicolás Tum Quixtán, catechist and Eucharistic minister, murdered, Chicamán, Guatemala.
- 11.19: Santos Jiménez and Jerónimo «Don Chomo», Protestant pastors, peasants, martyrs, Guatemala.
- 11.22: Trinidad Jiménez, coordinator of catechists and activist of CEB, killed, El Salvador.
- 11.23: Ernesto Abrego, pastor, disappeared with four of his brothers in El Salvador.
- 11.27: Juan Chacón and fellow leaders of the Democratic Revolutionary Front, martyrs in El Salvador.
- 11.27: Enrique Álvarez Córdoba and colleagues, El Salvador.
- 11.28: Marcial Serrano, pastor, martyr of the peasants of El Salvador.
- 12.02: Ita Catherine Ford and fellow Maryknoll, kidnapped, raped and murdered in El Salvador.
- 1985: 30 Years**
- 01.10: Ernesto Fernández Espino, Lutheran pastor, martyr of the refugees of the Salvadorian people.
- 02.09: Felipe Balam Tomás, religious missionary, servant of the poor, Guatemala.
- 02.21: Peasants crucified in Xeatzan, amid of the Guatemalan people.
- 02.28: Guillermo Céspedes Siabato, layman, engaged in CEBs, killed by the army, Colombia.
- 03.28: Héctor Gómez Calito, human rights defender, brutally murdered in Guatemala.
- 03.29: José Manuel Parada, a sociologist at the Vicariate of Solidarity, Santiago de Chile.
- 03.29: Santiago Natino, drawing student, Chile.
- 03.29: Manuel Guerrero, Union Leader, Chile.
- 04.04: Rosario Godoy, her husband Carlos Cuevas, her son Augusto and her brother Mainor, martyrs, El Salvador.
- 04.10: Oscar Fuentes, student, Chile.
- 04.10: Daniel Hubert Guillard, Belgian priest, pastor in Cali, Colombia, Killed by the army.
- 04.24: Laurita López, catechist, martyred for her faith in the Salvadorian Church.
- 04.28: Cleúsa Carolina Rody Coelho, Augustinian, killed for her defense of the Indian in Lábrea, Brasil.
- 05.10: Irne García, and Gustavo Chamorro, martyrs of justice in Guanabanal, Colombia.
- 07.24: Ezequiel Ramim, combonian, defender of the *posseiros* (squatters) in Cacoal, Rondônia, Brasil. Killed.
- 08.07: Christopher Williams, Evangelical pastor, martyr of the faith and solidarity in El Salvador.
- 08.14: Peasants martyrs of Accomarca, County of Ayacucho, Perú.
- 10.26: Hubert Luis Guillard, Belgian priest, pastor in Cali, Colombia.
- 11.17: Luis Che, celebrator of the Word, martyr of the faith in Guatemala.
- 12.18: João Canuto and children, union leader in Brasil.
- 1990: 25 Years**
- 01.01: Maureen Courtney and Teresa Rosales, religious sisters murdered in Nicaragua in the act of pastoral service.
- 02.07: Raynal Sáenz, priest, Perú.
- 02.11: Massacre in Guancorita, El Salvador, returnee village, by the army: 5 killed and 17 wounded.
- 02.22: Peasants martyrs in Iquicha, Perú.
- 03.04: Nahamán Carmona, street kid, Guatemala.
- 03.17: María Mejía, quiché peasant, Catholic Action member, killed in Sacapulas, Guatemala.
- 04.17: Tiberio Fernández, priest, and companions martyrs of the human development, in Trujillo, Colombia.
- 05.31: Clotario Blest, Christian prophet in the Chilean labor world.
- 06.07: Filomena Lopes Filha, religious sister, apostle of the favelas, Nova Iguaçu, murdered.
- 09.11: Myrna Mack, an anthropologist, murdered for her commitment to human rights in Guatemala.
- 09.27: Agustina Rivas, religious sister of the Good Shepherd, martyred in La Florida, Perú.
- 09.28: Pedro Martínez and Jorge Euceda, activists and journalists, martyrs of truth in El Salvador.
- 12.02: Peasants martyrs of Atitlán, Guatemala.
- 04.22: Paulo and José Canuto, sons of João Canuto (†18.12.1985), killed in Rio Maria, Pará, Brasil.
- 1995: 20 Years**
- 10.05: The Guatemalan army kills 11 peasants in the community of «Aurora 8 of October». Cobán.
- 2005: 10 Years**
- 05.21: João Araujo Guajajara, Indian leader killed by *fazendeiros* (farmers) for defending his land, Guajará, MA, Brasil.
- 05.24: Edickson Roberto Lemus, fighter for agrarian reform, murdered. Progreso, Honduras.
- 02.12: Dorothy Stang, ecology's martyr, murdered by order of the landowners, Anapú, Brasil.

Premios otorgados por la Agenda'2015...

• El Premio del **Concurso de Cuento Corto Latinoamericano** (350 euros) ha sido otorgado a **Richard Joel Rico López** (tsurichardrico@hotmail.com), de Acarigua, Venezuela, por su cuento «La Canción del Negro Ali». Lo publicamos en esta misma edición de la Agenda (págs. 238-239).

Convocamos para el año que viene la XXIª edición del Concurso (pág. 17).

Una amplia antología de «Cuentos cortos latinoamericanos» -ya más de ochenta-, no sólo los ganadores, sino los mejores de entre todos los que han sido presentados a concurso a lo largo de estos casi veinte años, está siendo puesta en línea como una sección de los Servicios Koinonía, en: servicioskoinonia.org/cuentoscortos

• El premio del Concurso de **Páginas Neobíblicas**, dotado con 350 euros, ha sido concedido a **Antonio Salomón MEDINA FUENTES** (uiosdelsoter@gmail.com) de El Salvador, por su página neobíblica «Promesas de esperanza para nuestra nación», actualización de Zacarías 8,1-12, que publicamos en esta misma edición de la Agenda (pág. 240), en la que convocamos la XXª edición de este Concurso (pág. 17).

Una amplia antología de «Páginas Neobíblicas» (ya más de un centenar) recibidas para el concurso en éste y otros años, continúa siendo publicada como sección de los Servicios Koinonía: servicioskoinonia.org/neobiblicas

• El jurado del **Concurso de Género** sobre el tema «Género y compromiso político», patrocinado por el **Centro de Comunicación y Educación CANTERA**, de Managua, Nicaragua, ha otorgado el premio, dotado con 500 US\$, a **Maite PÉREZ MILLET** (ccscbgl@enet.cu), de Santiago de Cuba, por su trabajo «Feminismo: peregrinaje hacia la liberación» (lo publicamos en esta Agenda en la página 242). Felicitaciones...

Con las mismas bases bajo un nuevo enfoque, queda convocado el certamen para el año que viene, con el tema «El derecho de las mujeres a participar en igualdad de condiciones y oportunidades en la vida social, política, cultural, económica y religiosa de la sociedad» (pág. 17).

• El premio del concurso convocado por el **Col·lectiu Ronda**, de Barcelona, dotado con 2.000 euros, ha sido otorgado al Comité de Derechos Humanos de La Legua, Chile (pascualcortes@gmail.com, blog: ddhhlalegua.wordpress.com). Véase el veredicto del Jurado en la página siguiente (15).

El concurso es convocado nuevamente para el próximo año, con nueva temática, en su ya XIIIª edición (cfr pág. 18), con una dotación de 2000 euros.

• En el **Concurso «Libertad y Justicia»**, convocado por **REDES**, de Puerto Rico (<http://redesperanza.org>), ha otorgado el premio a **María de los Ángeles PÉREZ HERNÁNDEZ** (mariangel@mhn.vega.inf.cu), de Pinar del Río, Cuba, por su trabajo «Libertad y Justicia en América Latina». Con una nueva temática, es convocado de nuevo este año 2015 para su ya IXª edición (cfr. pág. 16).

• El **Premio Antonio Montesinos al gesto profético en defensa de los Derechos Humanos** ha sido concedido este año a dom Erwin KRÄUTLER, obispo de Xingú, Brasil, y al P. Óscar JIMÉNEZ, de Chile. Véase una reseña de los motivos en la pág. 46.

• El **Premio a la Difusión de los Principios del Decrecimiento**, en su sexta edición (de 2013 para 2014) fue declarado desierto, como fue anunciado oportunamente en llatinoamericana.org

Vuelto a convocar para su ya VIIª edición (cfr. pág. 17), el concurso está dotado con 500 euros.

Los premios que proclama esta página son los concedidos en los certámenes convocados por la Agenda'2014; véalos también en: <http://latinoamericana.org/2015/premios>

Las convocatorias de esta Agenda'2015, para 2016, véalas en: <http://latinoamericana.org/2015/convocatorias>

• En el **concurso de Eco-Teología**, convocado por el equipo de investigación «ECOTEOLÓGIA» de la Facultad de Teología de la Pontificia Universidad Javeriana (Bogotá, Colombia), ha resultado ganador **Amós LÓPEZ RUBIO** (lopez.amos70@gmail.com), cubano residente temporalmente en Buenos Aires, por su trabajo: «La Salvación: una nueva forma de relación. Inspiraciones eco-teológicas para defender la vida». El premio está dotado con 400 euros y un paquete de materiales ecoteológicos.

El Jurado ha concedido además dos menciones honoríficas, a **Juvenio ALBRECHT** (juvenioalbrecht@yahoo.com.ar), de Puerto Esperanza, Misiones, Argentina, por su trabajo «En caminos de salvación», y a **Rubén Darío LASSAGA** (rubenlassaga@yahoo.com.ar), de Santiago del Estero, Argentina, por su trabajo «Salvación religiosa y salvación ecocósmica».

Los trabajos ganadores son publicados en el blog ecoteologiapuj.blogspot.com. Con una nueva temática ecoteológica, el concurso se vuelve a convocar, ya en su XIª edición (cf. pág. 19).

FELICITACIONES a todos los premiados, y nuestro **AGRADECIMIENTO** a todos los que han participado.

Les esperamos un año más. Los ganadores de premios de los concursos de cada año son dados a conocer en la edición siguiente de la Agenda Latinoamericana, y también, el primero de noviembre, en su sede virtual:

<http://latinoamericana.org>



XII PREMIO COL·LECTIU RONDA

Asesoría jurídica laboral económica social
Luchas por la Libertad

VEREDICTO

Al XII Premio «Col·lectiu Ronda asesoría jurídica laboral económica social» correspondiente a la Agenda Latinoamericana 2014, se han presentado ocho participaciones, este año bajo el tema de «Luchas por la Libertad – Experiencias de luchas por la liberación», como *una forma de compartir, una forma de ser futuro, libre y liberador, solidariamente fraterno*, en palabras de Pedro Casaldàliga.

Las postulaciones proceden de los siguientes países: tres experiencias de Chile, una de Colombia, una de Cuba y una de Puerto Rico. Finalmente dos proceden del Estado español: Cataluña y Madrid. Dos de los aspirantes al premio son trabajos que aunque son muy interesantes responden a estudios estrictamente personales, por lo que no pueden optar al mismo.

Los otros 6 trabajos colectivos presentados formulan su experiencia o estudio vinculado a luchas por la libertad desde distintos ángulos. Fundamentalmente se pueden dividir en dos grupos: un grupo que a través de experiencias culturales –teatro del oprimido, bibliotecas, pintura, o bien contacto con la naturaleza...– ofrece medios para la liberación de personas, especialmente jóvenes, con gran riesgo de exclusión social.

El otro grupo de experiencias tratan de las luchas por la liberación contra la represión en medios muy hostiles, prácticamente ocultos ante la opinión pública. Mención especial debemos hacer a la larga trayectoria de lucha antirrepresiva, unitaria y abnegada del Comité de Derechos Humanos de Puerto Rico.

El veredicto adoptado por unanimidad se otorga a la experiencia presentada por el Comité de Derechos Humanos de La Legua (Chile), por su lucha antirrepresiva, su defensa de los derechos humanos y la construcción de una comunidad humana y política que quiere lograr una libertad que le permita autogobernarse, ser dueña de su futuro y estar compuesta por seres humanos que por su propia dignidad conquistan para sí la historia.

Col·lectiu Ronda, Consejo Rector.
Barcelona, 30 de abril de 2014

CONCURSO «DERECHO HUMANO A LA NACIONALIDAD»

IXª Edición

El artículo 15 de la Declaración Universal de los Derechos Humanos proclama el «Derecho Humano a la Nacionalidad»:

- toda persona tiene derecho a una nacionalidad,
- a nadie se le privará arbitrariamente de su nacionalidad ni del derecho a cambiar de nacionalidad.

Los desplazamientos por conflictos armados, las luchas por el derecho a la libre determinación, el racismo... entre otras muchas situaciones que atraviesan nuestros pueblos, han traído nuevamente como un tema importante de debate el derecho a la nacionalidad.

Nos preguntamos ¿es inherente al ser humano la nacionalidad? ¿Este derecho está a la discreción política de los gobiernos? Tomando como ejemplo la situación de las personas dominicanas de ascendencia haitiana, la realidad de Palestina, Escocia y Puerto Rico, REDES nos convoca a ser parte de esta discusión reflexionando de una manera crítica a este respecto.

Envíe su escrito (de hasta 7000 pulsaciones), personal o colectivo (con su comunidad, sus alumnos/as sus vecinos/as, amigos/as...). Se aceptarán sólo escritos en castellano, antes del 31 de marzo de 2015 a: inforedes@redesperanza.org

El premio esta dotado con 500 dólares y un diploma de participación.

REDES, Red de Esperanza y Solidaridad,
Diócesis de Caguas, Puerto Rico.

PREMIO A LA DIFUSIÓN DE LOS PRINCIPIOS DEL «DECRECIMIENTO»

VIIª Edición

La «Comissió Agenda Llatinoamericana»,
de Girona, Cataluña, España,

CONVOCA este concurso, con las siguientes bases:

Temática: El «decrecimiento», como un paso necesario para alcanzar una libertad viable para los seres humanos (todos, todas) y también para la entera comunidad de vida de este planeta.

Contenido y formato: Se premiará a la persona, comunidad o entidad que, mediante trabajos escritos, organización de cursos o conferencias, trabajos de investigación, realización de material audiovisual, creación de material pedagógico para adultos o escolares, ejecución de acciones directas, etc., realice una mejor difusión de los principios del «decrecimiento».

Plazo y envío: Los trabajos o las memorias de las actividades organizadas tendrán que llegar antes del 30 de junio de 2015 a: Comissió de l'Agenda Llatinoamericana, Calle Mestre Francesc Civil, 3 bxs. / 17005-GIRONA / ☎ (34) 972 21 99 16. Correo-e: llatinoamericana@solidaries.org

Idioma: En cualquiera de los idiomas en los que se publica esta Agenda: castellano, catalán, portugués, inglés o italiano.

Premio: 500 euros. El jurado lo podrá declarar desierto, pero también podrá conceder uno o más accésits de 100 euros. La decisión del jurado se hará pública el 1 de noviembre de 2015 en: llatinoamericana.org

Concurso de «Páginas Neobíblicas», XXª edición

La **Agenda Latinoamericana** convoca la XXª edición del Concurso de «Páginas neobíblicas»:

1. Temática: tomando pie en alguna figura, situación o mensaje bíblico, sea del Primero o del Segundo Testamento, los concursantes intentarán una «relectura» desde la actual situación latinoamericana y mundial.
2. Los textos no deberán exceder de 9000 pulsaciones (caracteres más espacios). En castellano o portugués o catalán, en prosa o poesía, teniendo en cuenta

que, supuesta una calidad básica en la forma, lo que se premia es el contenido, el acierto y la creatividad en la «relectura» de la página bíblica escogida.

3. Los trabajos habrán de llegar antes del 31 de marzo de 2015 a: agenda@latinoamericana.org
 4. Premio: 400 euros y su publicación en la Agenda'2016.
- Será hecho público el 1 de noviembre de 2015 en <http://latinoamericana.org/2015/premios>

Concurso «Género y compromiso político», XXª edición

El **Centro de Comunicación y Educación Popular CANTERA** (www.canteranicaragua.org), y la Agenda Latinoamericana, convocan la XXª edición del concurso «Perspectiva de género en el desarrollo social»:

1. Temática: «El derecho de las mujeres a participar en igualdad de condiciones y oportunidades en la vida social, política, cultural económica y religiosa de la sociedad».
2. En estilo de ensayo.

3. Extensión e idioma: máximo de mil palabras, ó 6000 pulsaciones. En castellano, portugués, o en otros idiomas adjuntando una traducción al castellano.

4. Los trabajos habrán de llegar antes del 15 de marzo del año 2015 a: Cantera, Apdo. A-52, Managua, Nicaragua, cantera@ibw.com.ni, tel.: (505)-2277.5329
5. El texto ganador será premiado con 500 US\$. El jurado podrá declarar desierto el premio, pero podrá también conceder uno o varios accesits de 100 US\$.

Premio Antonio Montesinos al gesto profético en defensa de la dignidad humana, XXª edición

La Agenda Latinoamericana Mundial convoca esta XXª edición del «Premio Antonio Montesinos al gesto profético en defensa de la dignidad humana en América Latina». Con las siguientes bases:

1. Se quiere significar con esta distinción a la comunidad, grupo humano o persona cuya defensa de los derechos humanos actualice mejor hoy el gesto profético de Antonio Montesinos en *La Española* cuando se enfrentó a la violencia de la conquista con su grito «Éstos, ¿no son seres humanos?».

2. Cualquier grupo, persona o comunidad puede presentar candidatos a este premio, razonando los motivos y acompañándolos con firmas si lo cree oportuno, antes del 31 de marzo de 2015, a la propia Agenda Latinoamericana

3. El jurado admitirá a concurso tanto acciones puntuales, cuanto trabajos duraderos o actitudes proféticas mantenidas a lo largo de mucho tiempo.
4. Premio: 500 US\$. Podrá ser declarado desierto.

Concurso de «Cuento Corto Latinoamericano», XXIª edición

La **Agenda Latinoamericana** convoca esta vigésimo-primer edición del Concurso, con las siguientes bases:

1. Puede concursar toda persona que sintonice con las Causas de la Patria Grande.
2. Extensión e idioma: máximo de 18.000 pulsaciones. En castellano o portugués.
3. Temática: el cuento debe tratar de iluminar, desde su propio carácter literario, la actual coyuntura espiritual de América Latina: sus utopías, dificultades, motivaciones para la esperanza, alternativas, la interpreta-

ción de esta hora histórica...

4. Los textos deberán llegar antes del 31 de marzo de 2015 a: agenda@latinoamericana.org
5. El cuento ganador será premiado con 400 euros, y será publicado en la Agenda Latinoamericana'2016 (en unos 18 países). El fallo del jurado será hecho público el 1 de noviembre de 2015 en <http://latinoamericana.org/2016/premios>
6. El jurado podrá declarar desierto el premio, pero también podrá conceder accesits de 100 euros.

PREMIO
«COL·LECTIU RONDA»
XIIIª EDICIÓN

EL DERECHO A LA FRATERNIDAD

EXPERIENCIAS EN DEFENSA DEL DERECHO A LA FRATERNIDAD

El **Col·lectiu Ronda de Barcelona, asesoría jurídica, laboral, económica y social** al servicio de las personas y clases marginadas por el sistema neoliberal, fiel a su tradición de pensamiento y de compromiso, convoca la XIII edición del premio Col·lectiu Ronda para el año 2015, para contribuir a hacer realidad el derecho a la fraternidad.

Los orígenes históricos de la idea de fraternidad ya aparecen documentados por Aristóteles en la antigua Grecia (siglo IV a. C.). A partir de la Revolución Francesa y la independencia de los Estados Unidos de América (siglo XVIII d. C.) los valores de libertad, igualdad y fraternidad adquirieron notoriedad.

Después de las catástrofes producidas durante la Segunda Guerra mundial se firmó en París en el año 1948 la Declaración Universal de los Derechos Humanos: *Todos los seres humanos nacen libres e iguales en dignidad y derechos y, dotados como están de razón y conciencia, deben comportarse fraternalmente los unos con los otros.* (artículo 1). La fraternidad es un derecho y un deber. Derecho vulnerado sistemáticamente por el sistema capitalista y sus más recientes formas de presentación neoliberales y justificadas en aras de la globalización. Deber no siempre ejercido entre todas y todos.

La gran mayoría -por no decir todas- de las cosmovisiones proclaman el valor de la fraternidad. En concreto el Secretariado Permanente del Comité Confederal del Sindicato Anarquista CNT/AIT en Cataluña en el año 2013 proclamó nuevamente los valores de *la libertad, la fraternidad, la solidaridad, el soporte mutuo*.. El Papa de la Iglesia Católica Romana, Francisco, eligió la *fraternidad* como lema para la 47ª Jornada Mundial de la Paz, que ha tenido lugar en el año 2014.

Por todo ello, el Col·lectiu Ronda,

CONVOCA:

A las entidades, grupos, colectivos o análogos que actúen en el marco de los derechos humanos y de forma especial sobre el derecho humano a la fraternidad, con las siguientes

BASES:

Presentación de un **informe claro y concreto** sobre la experiencia llevada a cabo sobre derecho a la fraternidad. Se deberá referir el contexto social, la composición y la motivación de la entidad concursante, así como las actividades realizadas y la evaluación de los resultados obtenidos. Se deberá incorporar la presentación de la entidad y una memoria explicativa de sus actividades (máximo 20 páginas).

Idioma: castellano, portugués, catalán o cualquier otro de aquéllos en los que se publica la Agenda, acompañado de una traducción a cualquiera de los tres idiomas citados en primer lugar.

Envío y plazos: se deberá presentar antes del 31 de marzo de 2015 a las siguientes direcciones de correo electrónico: *agenda@latinamericana.org* y *jpujol@cronda.coop*. Se puede consultar otra forma de envío a las mismas direcciones.

Premio: 2.000 (dos mil) euros. Se podrá declarar desierto. También se podrá conceder algún accésit.

CONCURSO ECOTEOLÓGICO

TEOLOGÍA Y MINERÍA

DERECHOS DE LA MADRE TIERRA Y DEBERES DE LA HUMANIDAD

XIª Edición

La Escuela Superior de Estudios Franciscanos (ESEF), de Madrid, España, y el Equipo de Investigación ECOTEOLÓGICA, de la Facultad de Teología, Pontificia Universidad Javeriana, Bogotá, Colombia,

CONVOCAN al concurso: «TEOLOGÍA Y MINERÍA: Derechos de la Madre Tierra, Deberes de la Humanidad», con las siguientes **BASES**:

1. **Participantes:** El certamen tiene un enfoque macro-ecuménico, por tanto pueden participar, sin ningún tipo de restricción, todas las personas, comunidades e instituciones que sintonicen con las causas de la Patria Grande con un sentido de responsabilidad frente al cuidado de la Creación.

2. **Temática:** Dado el enfoque general de la *Agenda Latinoamericana Mundial 2015* sobre los Derechos Humanos, queremos invitar a pensar una perspectiva complementaria que incluya los derechos de la Madre Tierra y resalte los deberes de la humanidad en función del *Buen Vivir*. Son varios los autores que han venido trabajando en los años recientes en propuestas relacionadas con el Bien Común de la Creación, entre ellos Leonardo Boff y Miguel D'Escoto (<http://latinoamericana.org/2013/info/docs/DeclaracionBienComunHumanidadPropuesta.pdf>) y Francois Houtart (<http://www.miradoriu.org/spip.php?article485>). Se solicita que estos planteamientos se contrasten con las realidades conflictivas que en el mundo se están presentado por causa de los proyectos mineros y sus impactos en las personas y ecosistemas, y que además hagamos un aporte para revisar los imaginarios, paradigmas y representaciones mentales que en dichos escenarios se tienen respecto de Dios. ¿Dónde está el Creador mientras pasa lo que pasa? ¿Cómo comprender el «silencio» de Dios ante la destrucción de su Creación? ¿Acaso hay forma de articular el plan de salvación con los beneficios que ofrece la minería al avance tecnológico? ¿Cómo lograr un justo equilibrio? ¿En qué aspectos debemos renovar nuestra manera de pensar respecto a la relación entre humanidad y Madre Tierra? ¿Y entre la Madre Tierra y Dios?

Además, dado que el 29 de noviembre de 2014 se cumplen 35 años de la Bula con la que Francisco de Asís fue declarado como Santo Patrono de la Ecología, es requerido integrar los valores de la humildad, pobreza, fraternidad cósmica, diálogo interreligioso, espiritualidad y búsqueda de la paz, como aspectos relevantes dentro de la reflexión propuesta por el concurso.

3. **Pautas:** La extensión máxima para este documento es de 10 hojas tamaño carta (ó 20.000 caracteres) en castellano o portugués (si el trabajo está en otro idioma diferente debe incluirse una traducción al castellano). Para complementar las propuestas, los concursantes pueden apoyarse en videos, fotografías, diapositivas... que ilustren el contexto desde donde surge la reflexión.

4. **Fecha límite:** Los textos deberán llegar antes del 31 de marzo de 2015 a ecoteologia@gmail.com con copia a acaceres@javeriana.edu.co y esef.secretaria@gmail.com, o a la Carrera 5 N° 39-00, Piso 2 Edificio Arrupe, «Equipo Ecoteología», Facultad de Teología, Pontificia Universidad Javeriana, Bogotá D.C. – Colombia.

5. **Incentivos:** El texto ganador será premiado con 450 euros y un paquete de materiales ecoteológicos. El jurado podrá declarar desierto el premio, así como conceder uno o varios accésits. Así mismo, los mejores trabajos podrán ser divulgados por la página escuelafranciscana.galeon.com, el blog www.ecoteologiapuj.blogspot.com, la revista «Estudios Franciscanos» de Madrid, y la página de la Red de Ecoteología Iberoamericana y caribeña en *facebook*, para impulsar el diálogo teología/ecología en nuestro Oikos, la Creación.

SOURCES OF HUMAN RIGHTS INFORMATION

JOSÉ MANUEL FAJARDO

San Pedro Sula, Honduras

We intend to sketch as succinctly as possible a series of reports on HR by internationally accepted sources, to facilitate key references for those interested in keeping informed on the worldwide situation of human rights. To avoid overloading this text with illegible web addresses often difficult to copy, we have put all cited documents into the following pdf: latinoamericana.org/2015/info/Info-DDHH.pdf

Access all these documents and reports with just a few simple clicks.

Translation by Justiniano Liebl

UNITED NATIONS

Worldwide, the UN is considered the basic source for this theme. Given that its own institutional origins are rooted in the Declaration of Human Rights which gives meaning to all its work, we will review the 2013 Report of the High Commission on Human Rights, which has been under the jurisdiction of South African Navi Pillay since 2008.

This report -- available in six languages under the code A/68/36 in the Official Document System of the UN ODS -- has an evident and definite institutional flavor, since its objective is not to inform about the exact situation of human rights in the world, but rather to express the way the Office of the High Commission on Human Rights (OHCHR or UNHCHR) sees itself responding to the problems.

Nevertheless, it is worth reviewing the six themes given priority by the OHCHR, as they indicate "where the shoe pinches", that is, the worldwide areas of Human Rights in which most requests reach the Office soliciting attention for intervention, beginning with strengthening mechanisms of human rights and then advancing to protecting human rights in situations of armed conflict, violence and insecurity.

The priorities are developed over 22 pages of text, from which can be gleaned bits of interesting information such as: attention to urgent cases of the Arab Republic of Syria, attesting that the situation in these countries are becoming ever more regionalized; there is a periodic universal review (a type of triennial standardized test on the Human Rights situation in each member country) now in its second cycle and which has given 20,000 recommendations (an average of 120 per country) that can be found in the *Universal*

Index of Human Rights; an activity was organized at high levels together with the FIFA, in commemoration of The International Day for Elimination of Racial Discrimination, which brought together international players, agents and representatives of soccer/football; in Mauritania, a project was carried out to rehabilitate and empower former slaves through training in the art of recycling in order to facilitate their integration into society; in Papua New Guinea, help was given to repeal the Witchcraft Act; in July 2013, a campaign was launched promoting the human rights of lesbians, gays, bisexual and transgendered people; the UN Human Rights Council approved resolution #23/13 in June 2013 against attacks on and discrimination against albino people; in December 2012 *Indicators of Human Rights*, was published as a guide for the amount and application of assistance to States for incorporating human rights into their plans and national programs, as well as into their development agendas after 2015.

In its address on April 14, 2014, the OHCHR presented its Strategic Management Plan 2014-2017 with the addition of a new four-year projection, including as its priority "the expansion of democratic space."

Finally, there are three internet references of great interest where the OHCHR verifies the situation of Human Rights in specific countries with data that is fresh and reliable:

1) an interactive map, in which are reviewed the regions of the world, and each Member State of the UN; 2) the Universal Periodic Review, collecting the observations of the commissions that visit and evaluate the human rights situation of each country, with visitations scheduled from 2012 through 2016; 3) the

Dag Hammarskjöld Library of the United Nations has an extraordinarily friendly website which explains the institutional conformation that favorably permeates the UN defense of human rights and provides links to relevant texts and documentation.

UNDP

The annual report of the United Nations Development Program is another reference of interest on our subject. In what sense? The World-wide Report of the year 2000 makes it clear. In the context of the Cold War, and because of the prevailing political rhetoric of the time, humanity conceived itself as engaged in a kind of competition between civil and political rights versus economic and social rights. In the words of Mark Malloch Brown, the General Administrator of UNDP during those years, these were visions which competed for the world's future. It has now become a generally recognized, but not always shared, conviction in practice -- that both sets of rights are inextricably linked -- they are two sides of the same coin. Reviewing the above report is a healthy exercise in judging personally the compatibility and mutual synergies between Human Development and Human Rights.

So having justified our inclusion of this report to focus Human Rights in the world and Latin America, we have the *Summary of the 2013 Annual World Report* (28 pages, including preface, five chapters and statistical annex) entitled *The Rise of the South: human progress in a diverse world*.

This report verifies the prediction by the report of 2000, which foresaw a "surprising transformations in a good number of developing countries with major economies, and dynamic-growing-political influence, making a significant impact on the progress of human development of the region" (prologue of Contents). The cases of Brazil, China and India, whose economies for the year 2020 will exceed the total production of various countries of the G8, is a tangible sign of how much the civic, political, economic and social dimensions are intertwined. However, as also noted in the report, these relationships are not automatic: economic growth does not translate into human development progress without concurrent civil policy. For this reason, the Report recommends a "new governance"; both locally and globally to produce a just and egalitarian world.

Morality and rights must work in synergy if comprehensive fruits are to be realized.

Glancing at our Latin American scenario, we have before us the *Regional Report on Human Development 2013-2014*, with its 285 pages, entitled: "Citizen Security with a human face: --diagnostic and proposals for Latin America." While, on one hand, the presence of Latin America has been strengthened in the global economy, on the other hand, alarmingly increasing threats to safety have been recorded with more than 100,000 homicides a year (between 2000 and 2010 the homicide rate of the region grew 11%, whereas in most regions of the world it decreased or was stable; within a decade more than one million people in Latin America and the Caribbean have died from criminal violence; thefts have almost tripled during the past 25 years).

This level of insecurity impedes human development and with relation to our theme, it damages the very core of Human Rights -- people's life with both physical and material integrity. A careful reading of this report allows us to consider the need to recover the human right to social tranquility, but as the title says: "with a face that is human, without resorting to 'taking justice into their own hands' or 'hard-hand' policies" which lead to a result that is totally counter-productive for human rights.

This report is supplemented by that produced by the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights in December 2009, *Report on Citizen Security and HR which*, in #3 of its executive synopsis, notes that crime has displaced un-employment as the principle concern of the population, and here is where young people are most implicated -- both as victims and perpetrators.

The UN Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC)

Following the previous logic, where Human Rights are valued and thriving because of their comprehensiveness-both in their socio-economic as well as politico-civil forms, it is worthwhile to review the perspective of the ECLAC, where we can trace the economic condition of the region with a reflection that is both serious and reliable.

The document to be examined is a joint publication by The Center of Development of the OECD, ECLAC

and the Development Bank of Latin America(CAF). Its title is: *Outlooks for Latin American Economy 2014. Logistics and Competitiveness for Development* and it contains 169 pages.

The structure of the report presents three chapters of topics that supposedly will be maintained in future editions: 1) the macro-economic outlook; 2) Latin America faced with distribution of the world's wealth; 3) productive development focused on structural change. The basic data that introduces us to the text is that the first decade of this century (2003 to 2012), reflects an average annual growth of 4% for Latin America. This means advances in reduction of poverty and strengthening of "an emerging middle class". However, by the second decade of this century, the picture is less optimistic due to the global financial recession that has also slowed Latin American economic growth. This invites creating mechanisms for renewed competitiveness and productive structure.

This is not the place to delve deeper into data of the report, but we stand by their importance to appreciate them in order to put into context the "economic moment" pervading the ambience of human rights in the region.

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

This world-wide movement with over 50 years of seniority and more than three million supporters, offers The 2013 Report covering human rights violations gathered by the organization in 2012. Through alphabetical listing, this report presents the situation of 159 countries in its 367 pages, beginning with Afghanistan and ending with Zimbabwe. Mounted in the box comprising the title of each country, are also found the names of the heads of state or governments, followed immediately in bold print by an extract of the most characteristic Human Rights data; developed through a series of subtitles. Under the description of each country is given details of the reports and visits made by Amnesty International.

In the preface to the text, the Secretary General Salil Shetty, recalls the policy of "Responsibility to Protect" agreed upon at the UN in the year 2005, which criticized the attitude of states that would violate human rights of its citizens under the guise of protecting its national sovereignty. Several eloquent examples are offered as a reflection on this abusive

concept of sovereignty -- in particular the case of Syria which by that year had amassed 60,000 victims.

"Indifference under guise of respect for 'national sovereignty' is unjustifiable" the General Secretary goes on to say as he cites as example the treatment given to original peoples in past decades. From the Sawhoyamaya people of Paraguay, way up to the indigenous communities of Canada, these peoples have been besieged by displacement or pressure to use their territories for commercial purposes. This financial/business dimension that has a global character, differs from the problems that move people to migrate to find work, in so far as it has no major counterweight. The *UN International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families*, adopted in 1990, remains one of the least ratified human right conventions. And this is magnified by the situation of people without a country, of whom there are 12 million worldwide, 80% of whom are women.

Two hundred people die annually attempting to cross the desert into the USA; African migrants are forced to move away from the Italian coast just to protect the European side; both the Australian government and the USA Coast Guard intercept migrant sailors and immediately get them back to their countries of origin. "Sovereignty" claims more importance than the human right of individuals to seek asylum. All this in stark contrast with the complete mobility enjoyed by "financial capital" which crosses borders at will -- a mobility similarly enjoyed by conventional-arms running -- a lucrative business of some \$70 BILLION US annually.

Yet we are learning that through all of this shines a gleam of hope. It is becoming less possible for autocratic governments and human rights abusers to hide behind the borders of their "sovereignty." Between the years 1985 to 2012, there were 2.5 billion people who gained access to internet. Since 1996 and up to 2008 considering Hotmail, then blogging, Wikipidia, Facebook, YouTube and Twitter, there have been more people connected to internet in China than in USA. That means we are openly forming a model of global citizenship thanks to internet which has become an undeniable tool of empowerment.

In addition to its annual report, Amnesty International favors us with its quarterly magazine, which

already exceeds publication in 100 languages and is accessible through the official website of the institution. For a special glance at Latin America, it's worthwhile locating the text in the Publication's tabs as cited on its website, entitled: *Transforming Pain into Hope -- Women and Men Defending Human Rights in America*. Its 74 pages narrate full testimonies in defense of these inalienable rights.

HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH

The full English document of HRW for the year 2014 consists of 682 pages; its first article, written by Kenneth Roth, the institution's executive director, has been translated into Spanish. The article focuses on the emblematic case of Syria. Then, it references the world's worst areas in terms of human rights abuses -- highlighting the countries involved. Subsequently, it invites a critical view on two organizations: 1) the Human Rights Council of the UN, which has regained credibility after a slow start; 2) the USA Obama administration, which has revamped its method of treating violation of rights in relation to its "National Security".

The report continues with three more items that begin with an interesting photo and introduction to three neglected cases of human rights crisis: 1) early marriage in Southern Sudan; 2) the impact of the Olympics in Sochi on Human Rights in Russia; 3) the humanitarian tragedy in the Central African Republic. The most voluminous part of the report follows, dividing the countries examined into six geographic regions according.

In addition to the previous synopsis, it's worthwhile to examine two HRW documents that delve into a healthy criticism of the activity of the Human Rights Council of the UN. The documents are entitled: *Curing the Selectivity Syndrome: The 2011 Revision of the Human Rights Council*, and *Keep the Dynamic Going: A year in the life of the Human Rights Council of the UN*.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Another valuable reference for our purposes is that presented by the U.S. Secretary of State, John Kerry. As he points out in the Preface of the report entitled *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2013*, this is the commemoration of 65 years of

the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* and the paper tries to emphasize the continuous search for freedom and equal dignity in Human Rights in every corner of the world.

The body of the 19 page report begins mentioning the more than 100,000 victims of armed conflict in Syria, where the use of poison sarin gas by the Syrian army, has been the most lethal attack with chemical weapon in decades. Juxtaposed to this and other inhumane acts committed in various parts of the world, Kerry cites as signs of hope; "the Arab Spring" begun in 2011, plus the respect and high estimation expressed at the time of his passing for Nelson Mandela -- a real "human rights icon", and finally the youngest nomination for the Nobel Peace Prize, Malala Yousafzai, as well as others.

The description of the world-wide condition of Human Rights in 2013 is grouped into five key areas, namely: 1) Continued crackdown by governments on civil society and freedom of association and assembly; 2) Increasing restrictions on freedom of expression and of the press; 3) Lack of transparency over abuses by security forces; 4) Lack of effective protection for labor rights; 5) Marginalization of vulnerable groups: specifically: ethnic and religious minorities; women and children; people with disabilities and LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender) persons.

A subtitle introduces each area, followed by highlighted names of the countries where violations occur. This permits an easier and more selective reading of the report. During the last nine pages, the USA Department of State focuses in upon a number of countries where [in its judgment] human rights problems exist, which either escape the previous classifications, or where there have been significant progress in the field. This section is developed according to a hemispheric geographic system: Africa, East Asia and The Pacific, Europe, Middle East, etc.. In the Western Hemisphere: Cuba, Ecuador and Venezuela are highlighted.

As a supplementary aid, we also have the web page of LANIC (Latin American Network Information Center), in Spanish and English, where an extensive list of resources on human rights can be found (for each Latin American Country), at regional as well as international level, together with general references, besides publications and resources for research.

UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS

UNITED NATIONS, December 10, 1948

The General Assembly, Proclaims this Universal Declaration of Human Rights:

Article 1. All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood.

Article 2. Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status. Furthermore, no distinction shall be made on the basis of the political, jurisdictional or international status of the country or territory to which a person belongs, whether it be independent, trust, non-self-governing or under any other limitation of sovereignty.

Article 3. Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person.

Article 4. No one shall be held in slavery or servitude; slavery and the slave trade shall be prohibited in all their forms.

Article 5. No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

Article 6. Everyone has the right to recognition everywhere as a person before the law.

Article 7. All are equal before the law and are entitled without any discrimination to equal protection of the law. All are entitled to equal protection against any discrimination in violation of this Declaration and against any incitement to such discrimination.

Article 8. Everyone has the right to an effective remedy by the competent national tribunals for acts violating the fundamental rights granted him by the constitution or by law.

Article 9. No one shall be subjected to arbitrary arrest, detention or exile.

Article 10. Everyone is entitled in full equality to a fair and public hearing by an independent and impartial tribunal, in the determination of his rights and obligations and of any criminal charge against him.

Article 11. 1. Everyone charged with a penal offence has the right to be presumed innocent until proved guilty according to law in a public trial at which he has had all the guarantees necessary for his defence.

2. No one shall be held guilty of any penal offence

on account of any act or omission which did not constitute a penal offence, under national or international law, at the time when it was committed. Nor shall a heavier penalty be imposed than the one that was applicable at the time the penal offence was committed.

Article 12. No one shall be subjected to arbitrary interference with his privacy, family, home or correspondence, nor to attacks upon his honour and reputation. Everyone has the right to the protection of the law against such interference or attacks.

Article 13. 1. Everyone has the right to freedom of movement and residence within the borders of each State.

2. Everyone has the right to leave any country, including his own, and to return to his country.

Article 14.

1. Everyone has the right to seek and to enjoy in other countries asylum from persecution.

2. This right may not be invoked in the case of prosecutions genuinely arising from non-political crimes or from acts contrary to the purposes and principles of the United Nations.

Article 15. 1. Everyone has the right to a nationality.

2. No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his nationality nor denied the right to change his nationality.

Article 16. 1. Men and women of full age, without any limitation due to race, nationality or religion, have the right to marry and to found a family. They are entitled to equal rights as to marriage, during marriage and at its dissolution.

2. Marriages shall be entered into only with the free and full consent of the intending spouses.

3. The family is the natural and fundamental group unit of society and is entitled to protection by society and the State.

Article 17. 1. Everyone has the right to own property alone as well as in association with others.

2. No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his property.

Article 18. Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public

or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance.

Article 19. Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.

Article 20. 1. Everyone has the right to freedom of peaceful assembly and association. 2. No one may be compelled to be long to an association.

Article 21. 1. Everyone has the right to take part in the government of his country, directly or through freely chosen representatives.

2. Everyone has the right to equal access to public service in his country.

3. The will of the peoples shall be the basis of the authority of government; this will shall be expressed in periodic and genuine elections which shall be by universal and equal suffrage and shall be held by secret vote or by equivalent free voting procedures.

Article 22. Everyone, as a member of society, has the right to social security and is entitled to realization, through national effort and international co-operation and in accordance with the organization and resources of each State, of the economic, social and cultural rights indispensable for his dignity and the free development of his personality.

Article 23. 1. Everyone has the right to work, to free choice of employment, to just and favourable conditions of work and to protection against unemployment.

2. Everyone, without any discrimination, has the right to equal pay for equal work.

3. Everyone who works has the right to just and favourable remuneration ensuring for himself and his family an existence worthy of human dignity, and supplemented, if necessary, by other means of social protection.

4. Everyone has the right to form and to join trade unions for the protection of his interests.

Article 24. Everyone has the right to rest and leisure, including reasonable limitation of working hours and periodic holidays with pay.

Article 25. 1. Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other

lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control.

2. Motherhood and childhood are entitled to special care and assistance. All children, whether born in or out of wedlock, shall enjoy the same social protection.

Article 26. 1. Everyone has the right to education. Education shall be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages. Elementary education shall be compulsory. Technical and professional education shall be made generally available and higher education shall be equally accessible to all on the basis of merit.

2. Educations shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It shall promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups, and shall further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace.

3. Parents have a prior right to choose the kind of education that shall be given to their children.

Article 27. 1. Everyone has the right freely to participate in the cultural life of the community, to enjoy the arts and to share in scientific advancement and its benefits.

2. Everyone has the right to the protection of the moral and material interests resulting from any scientific, literary or artistic production of which he is the author.

Article 28. Everyone is entitled to a social and international order in which the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration can be fully realized.

Article 29. 1. Everyone has duties to the community in which alone the free and full development of his personality is possible.

2. In the exercise of his rights and freedoms, everyone shall be subject only to such limitations as are determined by law solely for the purpose of securing due recognition and respect for the rights and freedoms of others and of meeting the just requirements of morality, public order and the general welfare in a democratic society.

3. These rights and freedoms may in no case be exercised contrary to the purposes and principles of the United Nations.

Article 30. Nothing in this Declaration may be interpreted as implying for any State, group or person any right to engage in any activity or to perform any act aimed at the destruction of any of the rights and freedoms set forth herein.

JURIDICAL INSTRUMENTS ON WOMEN'S RIGHTS

Collection of References by
CARMEN BALTODANO
Cantera, Managua, Nicaragua

It is important to recognize that the international conventions and treaties detailed below, are not isolated from the struggle of many feminist women who devoted great efforts, constant dedication and even gave their lives so that today we would be able to have an international and national legal framework that is binding in most countries of the world to protect the human rights of women.

The most relevant international instruments for the protection of human rights of women are the following:

- **The Universal Declaration of Human Rights**, 1948: This opened the door to the signing of International Covenants on Human Rights and their Protocols, which form what we know today as the International Bill of Human Rights, ratified and assumed by most Member States of the UN, which obliges them to compliance and to recognize that human rights are universal, indivisible and related to the individual.

- **The Inter-American Convention on Granting Political Rights to Women**, was signed at the Ninth International Conference, (OEA) in Bogotá, Colombia in 1948. This established equality for men and women to exercise the political rights enshrined in the International Bill of Human Rights. Since this Convention, the right to vote and/or be elected to national office has been recognized for women in all countries.

- **The Convention on Political Rights of Women** (UN, 1952). The Member States signed to ratify the rights of women to vote and be elected to public office under the very same conditions as men and without discrimination.

- **The Second International Conference on Human Rights** (Vienna, 1993): Known as the "Vienna Declaration." This confirmed the rights of women to family planning (art. 41) and stresses the need to eliminate "all forms of sexual harassment, exploitation and trafficking of women", likewise "systematic violations, sexual slavery and forced pregnancies" (art. 38). This conference also elaborated its Declaration and a Program of Action, besides establishing its Special Reporting Office for Gender Violence.

- **The Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women** (UN, 1993): This recognizes that violence exercised against women is a social problem and calls it out by name "violence against women" and as such identifies it as a violation of the human rights and fundamental freedoms of women.

- **V International Conference on Population and Development** (Cairo, 1994): Includes in the HR group reproductive rights and sexual and reproductive health, establishing the right of people and couples to decide responsibly about their procreation (number of daughters/sons), time gap between the births of their daughters/sons, etc.); also establishes clandestine abortions as a "public health problem."

- **IV World Conference on Women** (Beijing, 1995): Representatives of 189 governments adopted the "Beijing Declaration and Action Platform" for eliminating obstacles to the participation of women in all spheres of both public and private life. This declaration states that men and women have the same sexual and reproductive rights and that all persons must assume equal responsibility for the consequences of their sexual actions. It addresses the unequal exercise of power, inequality to access of education, health and equal opportunities. Five years later (2002), the UN General Assembly met to assess progress of the Platform (Beijing + 5). New commitments were approved, such as: it approved compulsory education for both girls and boys; it adopted policies and laws aimed at eradicating violence against women; it created special programs to ensure the overall health of women. The first three World Conferences on Women were part of the process ascending to the achievements of Beijing. These conferences were held in Mexico 1976, Copenhagen 1980 and Nairobi 1985.

Translation by Justiniano Liebl

• **Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women: CEDAW (1979):** This was based on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights which recognizes that women have been discriminated because of their sex. It reaffirms that women's rights are human rights based on the principle of non-discrimination in order to assure equality for women in the exercise of their economic, social, cultural, civil and political rights.

• **The Inter-American Convention to Prevent, Sanction and Eradicate Violence against Women (Belem do Para, 1994).** It defines violence against women as "any action or conduct, physical, sexual or psychological based on their gender, which causes, injury, suffering, or death to women whether in their public or their private life" (art. 1) and establishes the eradication of violence against women as the "indispensable condition" for achieving equality.

• **Summits of the Americas:**

The **First** Summit of the Americas (Miami, 1994), was established as a commitment by States to strengthen the role of women in society in order to access all aspects of life: political, social, cultural and economic, with the aim to reduce conditions of poverty.

At the **Second** Summit (Santiago, Chile, 1998), with the same interest to eradicate the feminization of poverty and discrimination against women, the governments promised to develop legislative frameworks to facilitate the integration of women into society and to eradicate the violence against them

In the **third** (Quebec, Canada, 2001), states worked up and committed themselves to a plan of action to "strengthen democracy, create prosperity and realize human potential", with the issue of gender equality and human rights of women included in paragraph 15. Relevant here is the commitment assumed by the Inter-American Commission on Women (CIM), to promote the implementation of gender as a transverse theme in the OAS so as to become the central focus for developing capacities and communication concerning the human rights of women as well as working with governments on their commitment to sexually disaggregate the data they collect and disseminate.

In The **Extraordinary** Inter-American Summit (Texas, 2004), states reaffirmed their commitment to

empower women towards participation and leadership through equality of rights and opportunities.

• **Optional Protocol of the CEDAW (1999):**

Twenty years after the Convention had been approved, still under the same name, the UN General Assembly adopted the Protocol establishing mechanisms for receiving and investigating complaints by the CEDAW, and granting powers to the Committee for the elimination of discrimination against women. • •

• **The Millennium Declaration adopted at the UN Millennium Summit (New York, USA, 2000):** With the participation of 191 countries and representing 189 Member States, with the presence of 147 heads of state and government, it was possible to establish consensus for 8 goals, so-called "Millennium Development Goals" (MDGs): 1) Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger ; 2) Ensure universal primary education; 3) Promote gender equality and autonomy for women; 4) Reduce the infant mortality rate; 5) Improve maternal health; 6) Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases; 7) Ensure environmental sustainability; 8) Promote a world-wide partnership for development.

• **X Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean (Consensus of Quito, 2007):** the importance of this conference is that it recognized the socially and economically non-salaried value of domestic and care-giving activities and urged States to reflect this value in their national accounts and take actions to establish policies that would promote shared responsibility by both men and women in the home, as well as in assuming responsibility for the care of family dependents. In the field of sexual and reproductive rights, it re-affirmed those recognized by the V International Conference at Cairo, and called upon governments to ensure the overall health of women, without any kind of discrimination. It recognized that the objective of all the previous considerations was that women should have access to paid jobs and integration into political life with equal conditions and opportunities as men.

• **XI Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean (Consensus of Brazilia, 2010).** The theme of this conference was to analyze and discuss the achievements and challenges of Latin American women with a view to gender equality, and an emphasis on greater autonomy and economic empowerment.

HUMAN RIGHTS: BRIEF HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

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When revising the fundamental values listed in the *United Nations Declaration of the Millennium* of September 13, 2000, we could think that human rights are a *fait accompli*: freedom, equality, solidarity, tolerance, respect of nature and common responsibility. Nevertheless, its objectives, especially that referring to “Human rights, democracy and good government” are still far from many realities, and, although it is important to evaluate the reasons why humanity has not been able to achieve the real exercise of the Universal Declaration and its consequences, some progress in its evolution must be recognised.

These rights appeared and have developed from historical processes that continue today. Let us go back in the time line:

In 1993, the World Conference of Human Rights in Vienna establishes that the States, independently from their political, economic and cultural systems, must promote and protect human rights and fundamental freedoms.

The *World Declaration of Human Rights* establishes for the first time in history the civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights of all human beings. Its universality accepted, it is repeated in many international agreements, declarations and resolutions. Together with the International Agreement of Civil and Political Rights and its two optional protocols, as well as the International Agreement of Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, they form the so called *International Bill of Human Rights*.

1948 is a historical milestone, when the Human Rights Committee, under the presidency of Eleanor Roosevelt, draws the Universal Declaration of Human Rights that governs us today and establishes: “Ignorance and disdain of human rights have originated barbarous acts for the conscience of humanity, and the arrival of a world where human beings enjoy freedom of expression and beliefs and are free from scare and misery, has been proclaimed as the greatest aspiration of common people... All human be-

ings are born free and equal in dignity and rights”. This Declaration was ratified by representatives of all regions of the world and all legal traditions. Adopted by the United Nations on 10 December 1948, it describes 30 fundamental rights which have been included in the laws of member countries.

The terrible effects of the Second World War were the cause for, in April 1945, the delegates of 50 nations came together in San Francisco to create an international organisation to promote peace. The aim of the United Nations Conference about International Organisation expressed:

“We, peoples of the United Nations, are decided to protect coming generations from the scourge of war, which twice in our lives has produced immeasurable suffering to humanity”. It came into effect on 24 October 1945, when the United Nations Day is celebrated.

Before this, in the second half of the XIX century, 16 European countries and many from America attended the First Convention of Geneva in 1864, a diplomatic conference organised by the Swiss Federal Council and the Geneva Commission. They agreed to treat wounded in combat soldiers and their principles are kept by the Geneva Conventions, forcing the provision of medical attention to wounded or ill military personnel, and to respect the transport and equipment of medical personnel with the sign of a red cross.

In Latin America, after long colonial crisis and complex independence wars, in the first half of the XIX century constitutions are written in the new countries that abolish slavery. Some personal guarantees are incorporated into their laws such as legal equality of citizens, popular sovereignty, state legality, separation of powers and the right to property.

The XVIII century is a fundamental period in the evolution of human rights. The intellectual and social fermentation arising in Europe and America give rise to movements that cause the fall of the absolutist model. The monarchy is abolished and the

Translation by Alice Méndez

First French Republic is created in 1789. The Constituent National Assembly adopts in its constitution the *Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen*. All citizens must be guaranteed their rights to “freedom of property, security and resistance to oppression”. It refers to “natural, inalienable and sacred rights of man...” and “...the exercise of the natural rights of each man, has only the limits imposed by the exercise of those same rights by the rest of the members of society”.

In 1787 the *Constitution of the United States of America* is written, being fundamental law of the federal system of the United States and historical document for the world. It defines the main institutions of government and the basic rights of citizens. The first ten amendments to the Constitution came into effect on 15 December 1791, limiting the powers of government and protecting the rights of citizens. The *Bill of Rights* protects freedom of expression, religious freedom, the right to own and take weapons, the right to meeting and to petition. It prohibits the unreasonable search and seizure, the cruel and unusual punishment and forced self-incrimination, prohibits the Congress to pass laws establishing a religion, and the federal government to deprive any person of life, freedom or property without the due legal process.

Before this, on 4 July 1776, the United States Congress approved its *Independence Declaration*. Thomas Jefferson, among others, explains the reasons why Congress voted to declare the Independence of the United States, announcing that 13 colonies were not part of the British Empire. It puts emphasis on individual rights and the right to revolt, ideas widely accepted by the United States people and that influenced the French Revolution.

Another important fact, in 1628, the English Parliament sent Charles I the request of the Right to Petition, together with a declaration of civil freedoms. The rejection of Parliament to finance the unpopular policy of the king was cause for his government to request forced loans and that the troops were called to the homes of subjects as an economic measure. It demands that no tax can be collected without the consent of Parliament, no subject can be sent to prison without a proved cause –*habeas*

corpus-, and soldiers cannot be confined with citizens, or martial laws be used in times of peace.

In 1215 the *Magna Carta* was crucial for the development of human rights. After his abuses, king John of England was forced to sign the *Carta*, which lists rights such as no government intervention in the Church, rights of all free citizens to own and inherit property, protection from excessive taxes, the right of widows who owned property not to marry again, and legal guarantees and equality before the law, banning bribery and misconduct of officials.

In ancient history, the Roman laws establish the concept of “natural law”, non-written laws that were derived from the nature of things, notion going back to the year 539 BC, year of the conquest of Babylon, when Cyrus the Great, king of Persia, frees slaves and declares racial equality. Engraved in a cooked earthen cylinder with cuneiform script, it is recognised as the first human rights documents. These ideas were spread in India, Greece and Rome.

Today there are public institutions of human rights and national and international programmes for their compliance, but when we go over the recommendations done by the United Nations to various countries, apart from the many reports from organisations such as Oxfam or Amnesty International, we can see the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* is still an aspiration.

The Declaration refers to nations, individuals and institutions as well, when it establishes human rights as “a common ideal for which all nations and peoples must strive, so that both individuals and institutions, inspired constantly by it, promote, through education and teaching, the respect to those rights and freedoms, and guarantee, through progressive measures of national and international character, its universal and effective recognition and application”.

The universality, interrelation, inter-dependence and indivisibility of human rights are still a challenge and we should aim at instilling in all persons this idea; through education and practice in daily life public conscience should be spread that these rights are inalienable and inherent to the human being. Historic memory sets us, allowing us to see reality and project a new humanism in peace.

THE BASES OF LAW

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The consolidation of law coincides with the dawn of “modern times”, which can be located in the XVII century. Three milestones take us there. The first comes from the mathematician and philosopher René Descartes (1596-1650). In his *Discourse of Method* (1637), a classic and scathing expression sums up the emergence of subjectivity, that is, the conscience of the human being as an autonomous and rational person: *Cogito, ergo sum* (I think, then I exist). The other two milestones refer to the appearance of civil rights: on one hand, the American Independence War, with its famous “Declaration of Independence” (1776); on the other, the French Revolution (1789), with the “Declaration of Human and Citizen Rights” and the motto *Liberty, Equality and Fraternity*.

A retrospective look

We cannot forget that the bases of Law take root in much older times. We should take into account two traditions that influenced Western thought decisively. In the Judeo-Christian tradition, according to the Book of Genesis, human beings are created to the image and likeness of God, with the dignity of being children of the Creator. Hence, the insistence of biblical texts, especially the Prophetic, on justice and law, mainly towards “the orphan, the widow and the foreigner”. From this divine preference derives the “preferential option for the poor”, those excluded and defenceless, the last and those in most need... says Pope Francis.

The Greek-Roman tradition already underlines the duty and right of citizenship, for the organisation of the *pólis* (city, in Greek), with views to the greatest good of the greatest number of people. Democracy, with a free participation of citizens, has here its most remote roots. In the Roman world, mainly in the Republic, the idea of Civil Right prevails, to which every citizen can appeal. The apostle Paul, for example, when in prison, appealed in his condition of Roman citizen to the right to be judged in Rome. But both the Judeo-Christian and the Greek-Roman traditions, within a

strong patriarchal context of the ancient world, excluded women and slaves from the right of citizenship.

Modern bases of Law.

In modern times, two philosophers and two pieces of work are especially responsible for providing the bases of Law. Let us start with the French Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778). Among his works one outstands, *About Social Contract or bases of political right* (1762). Before him the English Thomas Hobbes (1588-1678) had published *About the citizen* (1642). Both works, from a socio-political point of view, show a “change of paradigm”, understood here as a constellation of principles, laws, norms, rules, institutions which give meaning to a set culture and vision of the world.

With this new paradigm, the power of the State and the Right of the citizen derive not from divine will, as was thought in the ancient and medieval world, but from an agreement between the existing social forces. The power to govern and the right of those governed is organised in a kind of “social agreement” which, based on conflicting interests of various groups, does not need a divine or religious legitimization.

Hobbes and Rousseau move the bases of law from a supernatural sphere to the order of human relations: personal, family, community or social, cultural and political. Hobbes does this because, as he states in his *Leviatán*, “man is a wolf to man”, and society “a war of all against all”. An agreement among the parties is needed, that will guarantee the right of each one and of everyone, against the others and the State.

On the contrary, Rousseau believes in “the primordial goodness of human nature”. Corrupted by historical interests and conflicts, the modern human being has produced injustices, contradictions that disintegrate the social fabric. New relations are needed to recover the “lost paradise”. Hence, next to the Social Contract, the sociologist presents a criticism of private property, origin of the worst evils of fallen humanity, according to him.

Protagonists of Law

The history of the West is marked by other milestones. In the Enlightenment of the XVIII century, following the Renaissance and the humanistic legacy, the human being freed from divine tutelage will make reason, science and experimental investigation the basic referents of knowledge and truth. The absolute value of religious tradition is substituted now for experience and novelty. The dynamic movement of history takes the place of static and immutable certainties. With the Industrial Revolution, technology and progress are in charge of producing goods to satisfy that big “thirst for new things”, in an increasingly accelerated “feverish excitement”. Both quoted expressions are taken from the *Rerum Novarum* (1891) encyclical of Leon XIII.

The Social Doctrine of the Church (DSI), appearing with that document, is also one of the bases of Law, mainly in those aspects that deal with the dignity of the human being. The DSI never renounced to the centrality of human rights, insisting as it does on some main issues such as the right to association and organisation, primacy of labour over capital, family wages, social function of private property, the role of the State towards citizens, the search for common well-being and a new name for peace as integral development. Actually, from Pope Leon XIII up to the present Pope, that main issue of human dignity has made of the texts of the DSI a criticism of dictatorial and totalitarian regimes. It has tried to defend the small and weak against the law of the strongest, present in the market and centralised power.

Pope Frances says in his *Evangelii Gaudium* (2013): “In the same way as the commandment “do not kill” sets a clear limit to ensure the value of human life, today we must say “no to an economy of exclusion and iniquity”. This economy kills (...). This is exclusion. That food is wasted cannot be tolerated now, when there are people who suffer hunger. This is iniquity. Toady everything comes into the game of competitiveness and the law of the strongest (...). As a consequence, big groups of population are excluded and marginalised: without work, without a future, without escape. The human being is considered himself as a commodity, who can be used and disposed of. We have started the culture of the “disposable” (cfr EG, N°53). The imbalance between technological progress and eco-

nomical progress on one hand, and human underdevelopment on the other hand, had already been denounced in *Gaudium et Spes* (1965) and *Populorum Progressio* (1967).

Present challenges to Law.

The same criticism of the contrast between income and wealth concentration and social exclusion had already been deepened by various thinkers. According to the English historian and philosopher Bertrand Russell (1872-1970) in his work *History of Western Philosophy*, if on the one hand the western democracies have eliminated the traditional political dynasties, they have not been able to eliminate the dynasties of income and the accumulation of wealth. These continue to be untouchable, independently of how the inherited property has been obtained: while the political inheritance had been abolished by the democratic process, the economic inheritance continues to be sacred and untouchable. With such wealth, the dominant classes reintroduce the political dynasty scenario. The economic and financial power, manipulating parties, leaders, the media... imposes its rules on electoral processes, perpetuating itself in power according to its own interests. The democratic fight in the West stopped half way: eliminated the superficial waves of the political game, but left intact the undercurrents of economic forces.

Beyond this problem of the economic democracy, the history of Law has other urgent challenges. It is true that its trajectory has come to light after the horrors caused by the two World Wars, ending in the terrible tragedy of the Holocaust. Before such barbaric deeds in 1948 appears the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. After the ashes, ruins, debris and corpses of the conflicts, and facing the menace of an atomic war, citizens claim more autonomy and more respect from absolute power and the State.

However, it is also true that many persons, groups, peoples and nations continue to be unprotected, apart from benefits. What is at stake is physical integrity, social, political, economic, cultural, environmental rights... which are part of the international agenda of movements and organisations that do not belong to governments. Law in its broad sense, extends now to humanity as a whole, and to the bio-diversity of the planet, both menaced by a devastating economy.

CITIZENSHIP: THE RIGHT TO HAVE RIGHTS

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The idea of subjects that constitute a State is fundamental to guarantee their political existence. This characteristic is attributed and legitimated by the political community, and is based on the principle of equality of all subjects that constitute such community. Nevertheless, it is necessary to understand that such equality (isonomy, equality under the law) is not a law of nature, as it was thought in the past, but, as Hannah Arendt, the political philosopher states, “we become equal as members of a community after a joint decision that guarantees the same rights to all” (LAFER, 1988, p. 150). For this to occur, a political institution, the State, is needed, who will recognise those equal subjects as its citizens, that is, holders of reciprocal rights and duties towards a common welfare. Hence, citizenship is the principle that grants the “right to have rights”.

The meaning of equality and who were those equals was not always the same. If we go back to the birth of politics in ancient Greece, we realise that not all those who lived in the Greek *polis* (city) were considered citizens, because these were only men, adult, free and born in the *polis*. Women, slaves, children and foreigners were not citizens, therefore, did not have a political life, only a social life. The status of citizen was attributed according to a natural role each individual had in the Universe. So, only the adult man, free, born in the *polis* could administer the public life. For this reason, in ancient Greece there are no big social changes, just some very well contextualised, like for example, from free man to slave (if he was defeated in war or was a debtor), or from citizen to foreigner (if he migrated to another *polis*). Society was fixed, stagnated, set in accordance with the established idea of harmony in the Universe.

Neither the Middle Ages were free from that Greek logic. The difference is that its justification lies in the divine will; that is, the social roles are a

consequence of the birth of the individual according to the will of God. In this way, rights and duties are granted according to the will of those who “God wished” them to be born with the power for that grant. This appeared for example in the servitude relationship, where the lords granted those rights to their servers at will, and not because the servers had any dignity to merit them.

The Modern Times, with the surge of the bourgeoisie to power, the birth of modern science, the emerging capitalism and the formation of national States, is who extends the isonomy to all who are now considered nationals (those who belong to a specific State because were born there or requested the nationality).

It is interesting to note that citizenship, here, has a direct link to a legal sense of the people that is: nationality is a prerequisite to citizenship. Now the persons are understood as individuals, having their rights like for example to life, freedom and property guaranteed by the State, so they can sell their production force; so that free commerce is favoured. An inversion of the traditional sense can be seen here: if before the public was at centre stage in the main concern of politics, now is satisfaction of needs that occupy that place. The human being is defined by his production capacity. Power, then comes to occupy the sad equation of $\text{POWER} = \text{VIOLENCE}$ (cf. ARENDT, 1989, p. 361).

Nevertheless, with the economic crisis that ruined Europe since the XIX century and its worsening in the aftermath of the First World War, or unemployment on a large scale and the instituted state of misery, a conducive environment appeared so that totalitarian ideologies came to power; in a proposal –somewhat “messianic”– to save the world through a racist policy, “cleaning the world from those who should have never existed”. With that practice, totalitarianism greatly threatens the “rights of man”, taking them to a crisis, when

withdrawing from those subjects –recognised as “objective enemies of the State”- their citizenship, therefore, turning them stateless. These people do not count on the protection of the law or any political agreement that recognises them as citizens. Their political existence is denied, being just simple human beings. As all the countries were also in an economic state of weakness and were menaced by a totalitarian ideology, nobody wished to host that mass of stateless people. Hence, that favoured the extermination policies. The totalitarian State made the Modern State concept to fail. A new State was necessary now. This must have as a first duty human dignity.

The seriousness of the problem, at that time, was in the fact that at a world level there were no rights based on the only fact of being human, purely and simply, independently of the need of a State to guarantee those to the individual. From there the need to think of human rights that protect the right of the human to inhabit the world his way, since totalitarianism wants to end human plurality (differences in the way of being), because only those the system considers apt for it can exist in the world.

Thus, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, committed to human dignity, was an answer to that crisis of “the rights of Man”. In article XV

of the declaration, it is stated that “every person has the right to a nationality” and “nobody will be arbitrarily deprived of it, or of the right to change nationality”; that is, the right to a nationality, and, hence, to a citizenship are fundamental requirements for a dignified life in this world. And this, because just by this political-legal link the human being can develop, with legal safety, his capacities in a common space, being transformed and, also, transforming the world his way.

Human rights then are seen as a historical conquest of humanity. In this conquest, the guarantee of citizenship is fundamental for the conservation of plurality in the world, and for the “right to have rights”. Therefore, only by militantly committing to deepen and defend that civic consciousness is how we will gain a public space true to what it should be: the proper environment from which to guarantee the common well-being, of all and each. That is, this must be for all of us the political space par excellence.

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THE THREE DIMENSIONS OF CITIZENSHIP

Civil citizenship: comprises the rights to individual freedom: freedom of expression, thought and religion, the right to justice and to property and to set valid contracts.

Political citizenship: consists on the right to participate in the exercise of political power as member of a body invested with political authority or as a voter of its members.

Social citizenship: it embraces a full scope including the right to a minimum economic well-being, to fully share the social legacy and to live according to the predominant standards in the society.

PNUD, *Informe Regional de Desarrollo Humano 2013-2014. Diagnóstico y propuestas para América Latina*, PNUD, Nueva York 2013, pág 11.

UNIVERSALITY OF HUMAN RIGHTS

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The charter of the United Nations proclaims that human rights are universal and correspond to every human person simply for being a person and that these rights are valid anywhere in the world and under all circumstances. Why do these rights continue to be seen as mere formalities? Would it be just possible for them to get accepted as the legal and political foundation for each and every differing group of people on earth?

The “nation-state” continues to be the predominant factor for the practical application of human rights, and consequently also is the world-wide system of states basically responsible for making human rights a living reality. But the state, as we know it today, has not always existed, nor is there anything preventing us to change the system of states that has prevailed in the world since the seventeenth century. Of course, we could slip into worse systems, or even into apocalyptic scenarios such as a “Third World War”, nevertheless better systems are also possible. In the film “The Mission” the Cardinal Altamirano pretends to justify the slaughter of indigenous peoples, saying: “The world is not so; we have made it so”. Not everything is perforce necessary. A cursory glance at history shows how we go about appropriating never imagined possibilities.

In the fourth century C.E. so called “Caesaro-papism” appeared in the West, with Emperor Constantine who was both religious and political ruler: “Pontifex Maximus”. Christianity was Constantine’s solution to consolidate his crumbling empire. The church became part of Constantine’s “managerial flow chart”: intervening decisively in his favor, through its administration and elaboration of dogmas. In the eighth century the Roman Empire finally collapsed and gave rise to feudalism: small self-sufficient and autonomous territories of a politico-social structure, ruled by a warlord who cared for the serfs and proffered them land to farm in exchange for their complete submission.

With the eleventh century, so called “Theocracy” arrived: the Pope, differing from the time of “Caesaro-papism”, now is considered above kings and even with the right to depose them. The civil power func-

tioned then as servant to the religious power embodied in “The Church”.

The end of 16th century brought in the theory of “Divine Right” for the king’s power. Any and every disobedience to his political power was also an affront to the divine order. The king did not recognize any power over himself and could exercise his sovereign power within his territory without any limit, subjecting even the Papacy and feudal lords. These are the “Absolute Monarchies” that gave birth to today’s system of nation-states. With the signing of the “Peace of Westphalia” in 1648 plus the progress of colonization, the nation-state political formula became enshrined in the entire planet. States recognized each other’s sovereignty and equality. They established the principle of “non-intervention” in the internal affairs of each other. The principle of “territorial integrity” now became the foundation for their existence, contrary to the feudal concept that territory and people made up a patrimony.

Throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries a number of philosophers (Hobbes, Locke, Rousseau ...) tried to explain rationally the origin and basis of political society. They formulated the “Social Contract Theory”: the vision that legitimacy to impose law came not from God, - as the theory of divine origin claimed for sovereign power - but rose from the very citizens themselves, as a result of a rational decision made by free and equal people.

Since the French Revolution (1789), States began to morph from “Absolute Monarchies” into the current “Constitutional States” with division of powers: legislative, executive and judicial. However the “contractual theory” has not become sufficiently popular to maintain state cohesion. On the contrary, the concept of nation, perfectly replaces the previous theological foundation for legitimacy and exercises a similar function in territorial unification. The State doesn’t evolve from a pre-existing nation or people, but rather to become a State it subjugates human groups of different cultures, languages and races, to its own power. Just recall groups culturally divided and subjected to

Translation by Justinuano Liebl

different states: Aymara, Mapuche, Guarani, Mískito ...

In our XXI century, the development of economic, political, social and cultural relations hover way above the borders between states and hardly take into account administrative and political divisions that people establish. New technological information, economic networks and interchanges of people, make the decisions and actions of each one affect the life and fate of distant peoples all over our planet's geography. We are all active and passive agents in the great river of interactions of the global society.

The failure of the state is particularly marked by the existence of an unregulated global market that allows huge material inequalities within and between countries, in addition to generating a high environmental cost. Decisions that affect us all are made without any democratic control (World Bank, Security Council of the UN, managers of large multinational companies ...). Some nation-states try to halt ecological disaster, but the environment does not recognize borders. On the other hand, thousands of human beings find themselves abandoned by former welfare states, so now they turn to ethnic intolerance, aggressive nationalism and religious fundamentalism, seeking reassurance and protection.

As far as the universality of human rights and their effective defense is concerned, all now has become decimated since - according to the logic of nation states: each State is empowered to enforce its laws within its own borders, and supposed to respect the reciprocal right of other States to do likewise. Differences between states are ultimately resolved by force and within an anarchic environment without any regulation; each State makes its own decisions according to its preferences, in order to maintain or increase its own power.

In short, the current system of economic, social and cultural relations, no longer offers a valid framework in which to be regulated but instead demands transforming innate powers into concrete, legitimate and effective powers. The great challenge of this century is to shape up a new world order in which human rights and ecological preservation of our planet actually come to form the legal and political foundation. Some matters should be handled at a local level; others at a national, regional or global level. Democracy must adapt itself to different levels of political

decision using efficiency as its criterion: matters that can be effectively treated at a lower level ought to be resolved at that level without rising to the next. (principle of "subsidiarity").

Authors such as David Held, Jürgen Habermas and Ulrich Beck have proposed a "Cosmopolitan Democracy" (cf. Google): a governance and democracy from the local to the global without aspiring to create any "State"; a world government or Federation of States. It may be objected that this proposal does not seem to have much acceptance among the public; solidarity beyond existing borders seems an ideal not rooted in reality, much less when it involves people differing in religions, traditions and cultures. Nevertheless it is also true that a Global Civil Society is being born, through the extension of communication networks throughout the world forming bonds between peoples of different States, and broadening the world horizons of people (eg, one can be Mauritanian by birth, Buddhist, soccer fan of Barca, speak Wolof and French, enjoy dancing salsa and reading novels by Gabriel García Márquez ...). All this enables the extension of a global solidarity network.

One can also object that apparently there are growing phenomena opposing the cosmopolitan ideal: reclaiming the formation of sovereign states by different cultures that consider themselves not sufficiently recognized: Basques and Catalans in Spain; Aymaras in Bolivia, Chile and Peru; Kurds in Turkey; and many, many more. However, a cosmopolitan democracy does not intend to suppress local identities nor sacrifice languages or cultures but rather to articulate them within networks and centers of democratic global power.

Although the difficulties seem to be great, still on the other side of the balance pan go the non-action while the current existing nation-state structure leads to collapse, ecological disaster, huge economic inequality and ultimately war. At this moment, a cosmopolitan democracy, based on the universality of human rights is not only a moral aspiration but a moral imperative. It's in our hands to convert this aspiration into a global, positive, legal system where our common human condition carries more weight than any ethnic, national, linguistic, territorial or cultural discrimination.

HUMAN RIGHTS: NEW PARADIGM FOR POLITICS

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In social and political matters everybody in one way or another refer to human rights. Why? Because human rights legitimate our dealings, being the normative base of the principles all recognise. Whoever says he fights for his human right, his right to be a person, or the right of others to be persons, is, in principle, in his right.

But it is not so simple; the existence of human rights is recognised universally, but to talk of what a human right specifically is, or how the different human rights interrelate, that is another thing.

In past decades, when we talked about human rights we referred to political rights: freedom of speech and of meeting, physical integrity or protection against detention and torture. When it was about the right to equality –for example the right of the peoples to political participation-, or the overcoming of hunger, poverty and misery, we seldom referred to human rights or used them as an argument.

This is understandable if we take into consideration that, in fact, human rights had been for long “political rights” of the bourgeoisie, valid mostly for white, rich and healthy men. Here we can clearly see the influence of the North American Declaration of Independence of 1776: All men are created equal [...and are] endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights, among which are life, freedom and the search for happiness. The most important point here lies in freedom, a freedom that can be claimed even from the State. It was then taken for granted that it referred to freedom from the British and French colonialisms.

But this has been a concept of freedom that has been always felt threatened by the demand of equality (for example on the part of the “socialist” State, or from socialist ideas). Hence, frequently, political rights were used as a bulwark against the

“equality” claimed by the people, and many governments were able to make war against their citizens claiming the defence of freedom and human rights: from Argentina to Brazil, from Chile and El Salvador to Nicaragua. Then, leaving aside the right to equality, in the logic of the dominators, it was clear that making equality a reality was a private matter. If one has this point of view, one would not fight on behalf of the people, but on behalf of the human right to freedom... This is, maybe, another reason why in our fight for justice and equality we have not referred to human rights.

However, at other times human rights had a very important role for us: in the human rights movements that fought for the enforcement of individual political rights against the State, mainly against the military dictatorships, the arbitrary detentions, the disappearances and torture. In turn, the State, on the contrary, on behalf of individual freedom, fought against those who were claiming for equality (popular movements of liberation).

For some time now more talk of social rights has appeared, and hence the right to equality (social justice). New human rights that did not exist before and nobody would describe as human rights, have been declared as such in the last decades: the right to education, to health, clean water, healthy food, as well as the right to the access to information. As it is mentioned in the Declaration and Action Programme of Vienna, of the World Human Rights Conference, in 1993: All people are born equal and have the same right to life and well-being, to education and work, to an independent life and active participation in all aspects of society.

Nevertheless, individual political rights are still having priority over social rights: the lack of freedom in some countries –like for example Iraq or Afghanistan- have become reason for military interventions, but the lack of equality –for example

Translation by Alice Méndez

poverty or lack of medical assistance- have never been motifs for an intervention. Therefore, there is enough reason to look with suspicion at the human rights speeches.

The Human Rights Conference of Vienna offers a very interesting clue about the essence of human rights and the way these could be reread and understood to justify our actions in times of capitalist globalization. Also human rights are modified, expanded and must be constantly reinterpreted and concretised. If we remember the origin of human rights, we will understand they have a history and have appeared from a political practice, not from the thought of wise philosophers or politicians.

For example, in the French Revolution in 1789 human rights were proclaimed, and in the first article of the Declaration of the rights of the person and the citizen, it was stated: "Men are born and stay free and equal in rights". Naturally this made reference to white men, same as the United States Constitution. For this reason women revolted and, in 1791, Olimpia de Gouges demanded: If the woman has the right to mount the scaffold, she must equally have the right to mount the Tribune. That same year, free black people from Haiti fought for their independence, that is, their freedom. Sometime later slavery was abolished by Toussaint Louverture (again slaves were excluded from the initial declarations of human rights).

The history of human rights is the history of the fight for human rights, for their broadening, reinterpretation and generalization. Politics and democracy are not about implementing the existing human rights, but about the fight, the invention and the realization of human rights, with the conscience that every person has "the right to have rights" –as once the German philosopher Hannah Arendt stated-. This also means the right to say, now and here, what a human right would be in the present conditions: in a global society, that produces enough wealth for everyone, to be able to participate of it; in a world global society, that recognises the freedom to move capital, to demand

the freedom of migration or permanence; in a world that celebrates variety and the polychrome of products, demand the right to an identity...

To do Politics according to human rights is not to be guided by the existing catalogues of human rights and be limited by them, but to permanently question the authority that embodies the human rights into laws, frequently adapting them for its own interests. It does not mean to yield human rights to sovereignties, neither of nations/governments nor of supranational institutions such as the UN. Human rights are rarely the result of political considerations and agreements. Rather, they are the result of our fights and rebellions, the same as the first human rights declaration was the result and consequence of a revolutionary movement.

Of course, that was an upsurge in which there existed no contradiction between the principles of freedom and equality before mentioned. The demand for freedom was directed to the king and the one for equality to the nobility. Today we know that there is almost no situation in which freedom and equality are not two simultaneous demands and needs. Where there is lack of equality, there is also lack of freedom, and vice versa. They are not only contradictory, but also depend one on the other. More than both sides of a coin, they are "equalfreedom", as the French Étienne Balibar says. Freedom and equality are opposed only when they are understood as ideal constructions, as theory. In the real fights, they go hand in hand. Maybe, on occasions the left was too idealistic?

In this sense, human rights could be understood as a new paradigm of politics. As politics for which the contradictions and different demands of freedom and equality are not seen as problems, but as a new horizon for a really democratic world. A world that will not be given to us, but that we must claim. The same as in 1795 the people in Paris and the group of the Conspiracy of the equal did: We do not only wish for a written equality in the Declaration of the rights of the human and citizen, but we demand it among us, under the roof of our houses.

HUMAN RIGHTS OF WOMEN

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"The human rights of women" sounds odd, even redundant. Since women are human beings, it should be sufficient to talk about human rights in an inclusive way. Unfortunately, that's not the case. In actual practice, women aren't treated like human beings, and as a result their rights are not respected. Or, perhaps, they're seen as half of a human being and, consequently, their rights are only half recognized. This is the product of gender inequalities that are the result of discrimination against women. According to the International Labor Organization (2008), women receive 70% of the average salary of men. Many women continue to die in childbirth: 130 women in 100,000 live births, and in some countries like Costa Rica, 49.7% of pregnancies are unwanted (ECLAC, Economic Commission on Latin America and the Caribbean, 2007).

What is more shocking, however, is the murder of women in the private sphere. Not only have murders not stopped, they have in fact increased on a daily basis throughout the world, and not just in poor countries. In Central America, two out of three murdered women are killed for the mere fact that they are women. The first step that leads to murder is violence. Precisely for this reason, everyone, women and men alike, must denounce violence as their first priority, as well as the impunity that accompanies it the majority of cases. According to the Secretary General of the United Nations, Ban Ki Moon, the level of violence against women is so high that it constitutes one of the most violated human rights.

In the face of this reality, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948 proves deficient because it does not cover everyone's human rights, including those of girls and boys. Since the 70s the Declaration has been denounced as an abstract and androcentric document that fails to take into consideration the diversity of actual people who have specific gender, class, ethnic, and race identities. Thanks to the feminist movement and its constant concern about violence against women, the *Convention for the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women* (CEDAW) came to be in 1979; it went into effect in 1981 and has been ratified by a large

number of countries. CEDAW is seen as a viable framework that can lead to concrete measures that guarantee gender equality. But as we see in the majority of our countries' laws, this document has not stopped discrimination against women -- the driving force of violence. Still, more laws and protocols continue to be established with the hope of ending this fundamental evil.

At the 1993 Vienna World Conference on Human Rights, there was an explicit recognition that women have specific human rights. In other words, the full humanity of women was affirmed so that the innate human rights they deserve could be affirmed. Since the 70s there has been a growing call for the reformulation of women's rights, in particular sexual and reproductive rights. But it was in Cairo at the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development that women's rights to sexual and reproductive health were discussed in greater depth.

The 1995 Beijing Fourth World Conference on Women reaffirmed the Cairo Document in terms of sexuality and provided more concrete steps as regards the sexual and reproductive rights of women, such as women having control of issues related to their sexuality and their bodies, not being subject to coercion, discrimination, or violence.

In the Americas, the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights took up the commitment to women reached in 1994 and created what is called the Rapporteurship on the Rights of Women -- tasked with securing the respect and guarantee the human rights of women in all member states and to make sure that, in response, all of the member states have taken the necessary legislative measures in their respective state legislation. But the Commission's goal to prevent, sanction, and eliminate violence against women has not been accomplished.

The violence against women in Colombia is just one indication. According to statistics from the Colombian National Institute of Legal Medicine and Forensic Sciences, in 2012, 47,620 women were assaulted by their partner, which means that on a monthly basis 3,968 women had experienced violence


Translation by Curt Cadorette and Molly Graver

from their partner or ex-partner. There are men who complain about suffering violence at the hands of women, but according to statistical analyses, for every nine women who report being the victims of violence from their partner or ex-partner, only one man makes that report.

The affirmation of the human rights of women has been one of humankind's greatest advances, but as statistics reveal, the declarations, laws, protocols, and rapporteurs are not enough.

What is needed is a profound change of socio-cultural and religious patterns. The churches must stop being obstacles to the recognition of the human rights of women, especially in terms of their sexual and reproductive rights.

And those who read the Bible in a fundamentalist way should be aware how this negatively impacts women, by considering them subordinate to men and controlled by a patriarchal God.

We women ask for one thing: let us be human beings with rights. We simply want to be citizens, free of violence and discrimination. 

LATIN AMERICA: THE HIGHEST RATE OF FEMICIDE IN THE WORLD

CENTRAL AMERICA: 4 TIMES MORE THAN THE CONTINENTAL AVERAGE

<http://cosecharoja.org/femicidio-latinoamerica-tiene-las-tasas-mas-altas-del-mundo>
<http://cosecharoja.org> y <http://feminicidio.net>

According to *Femicide: A Global Problem*, specifically in a chapter entitled "Small Arms Survey," 66,000 women and girls are murdered each year. They represent 17% of all intentional homicides committed by men. Of the 12 countries with the highest rate of femicides, five are Latin American (El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Colombia, and Bolivia) and they exceed six murders per 100,000 women.

The study, published in Geneva in 2012 (Geneva, smallarmssurvey.org), points to the high murder rate of women in the countries studied. The highest rate is in Latin America. In El Salvador, 12 out of 100,000 women is murdered, (thus a rate of 12 femicides). Jamaica has a rate of 10.9, Guatemala 9.7, South Africa 9.6, Honduras 7, Brazil slightly more than 6, Colombia and Bolivia 6, Ecuador and the Dominican Republic 3.

Cuidad Juárez (Mexico) is the city with the highest murder rate – 19.1 women per 100,000 are murdered.

In Argentina according to statistics from La Casa del Encuentro (lacasadelencuentro.org), the murders of women almost always take place in the same place – the home. Women end up mutilated, burned, strangled, murdered. The criminal is almost always a husband, boyfriend, ex-husband, or ex-boyfriend. In 2013, women murder victims increased by 15%, growing from 255 to 295, one victim every 30 hours. The criminals don't stop, and the number of victims keeps increasing.

"The home can be the most dangerous place for a woman – a fact that

is particularly jarring when those who should protect their loved ones are the very people who are responsible for their murder," as Jean-Luc Lemahieu, the director of the UN Division for Policy Analysis and Public Affairs, mentioned when the publication *Global Study on Homicide 2013* was released in London.

Albeit 36% of the 437,000 murders in 2012 were committed in the Americas, Argentina has one of the lowest rates of the area. The worldwide study points to "the sub-region of Latin America, and the rates of murder in southern cone (Argentina, Chile, Uruguay) approximate measured rates in Europe."

The American continent comes in as one of the most violent parts of the world because Central America has a murder rate that is four times higher than average. In terms of the homicide rates in other countries, 31% occurred in Africa, 28% in Asia, 5% in Europe, and 0.3% in Oceania. In the Americas, 66% of murders involved fire arms, the rest, the other half, were caused by lethal blows. In Europe and Oceania the use of fire arms is much less – 13 and 10% respectively. On a worldwide level, 95% of murderers are men, and men make up 80% of the victims as well.

As the same report indicates, "the design of effective strategies for the prevention and reduction of violence depends especially on the availability of trustworthy and verifiable information about the role of violence in general in terms of gender, age, and the relationship between the perpetrator and the instruments employed."

THE "RIGHTS OF NATURE:" WHEN WORDS FALL SHORT

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The concept of human rights is one of the noblest achievements of modern society. Enshrined in the most fundamental documents of the Eighteenth-century Enlightenment, it has been greatly expanded and enhanced in the light of social and political movements that have arisen in recent times.

But is it helpful to speak of nature as having "rights"? To do so is, it seems to me, to fail to distinguish among levels of reality – and to underestimate, by several orders of magnitude, the significance of the natural world for human society.

The current environmental crisis gives us the opportunity to rediscover our true relationship with the natural world. It is not enough to merely acknowledge the "rights" of nature: in this moment we are challenged to redesign our most fundamental institutions – indeed, perhaps, our languages themselves – in order to guarantee the integrity of the Earth's living systems.

A closer look

Paleontologists have determined that the first animals appeared in the archaic seas about 570 million years ago. Since then, more and more complex life-forms have evolved. However, the evolutionary process has been far from smooth: in the eons since this event there have been five massive extinction spasms, each of which brought about the disappearance of a high percentage of all living species. The most recent such extinction occurred almost 67 million years ago: it exterminated the dinosaurs, along with every land and sea animal weighing more than 25 kilos.

As a result of this planetary catastrophe an entire geological era, the Mesozoic, came to an end. And a new one was born: we call it the Cenozoic Era, or the Age of Mammals.

In the absence of dinosaurs, mammals took over: their numbers burgeoned and mammalian species diversified wildly. A great variety of flowering trees evolved, bearing fragrant blossoms and delectable fruits. Tens of thousands of species of bees and butterflies appeared, along with multiple shapes and colors of songbirds. And more than 60 million years after it opened, the Cenozoic Era witnessed the emergence of the earliest hominids.

We may conclude, then, that the richness and beauty of the Cenozoic Era – aptly called the lyric period of Earth's evolution – constituted the matrix within which the human heart and spirit were conceived.

And now, the Cenozoic Era is coming to an end.

There is wide agreement among evolutionary biologists that we are immersed in a massive new extinction spasm – this one precipitated above all by the actions of one species, the human race. Our technological prowess, and especially the burning of fossil fuels during the last two centuries, has given us a key role in defining the planet's destiny. Now and in the future, it is above all human actions that will determine which living beings survive – and which are destined to disappear.

Humanity has never before faced a challenge that is even remotely comparable. The transitions from the Paleolithic to the Neolithic periods, or from the Middle Ages to the modern period, pale in comparison with the upheavals we face at this moment.

We are in the midst of a totally unprecedented crisis, a shock wave of geological proportions.

In the face of this supreme challenge, it would be impossible to exaggerate the magnitude of the changes demanded of us. This critical situation will not be resolved with modest adjustments such as recycling trash or taking shorter showers; what will be required is a fundamental reorientation of human affairs. As geologist Thomas Berry often insisted, we need to "reinvent ourselves at the species level."

It will not be the first time we have reinvented ourselves. Around 12,000 years ago we began to abandon our Paleolithic hunter-gatherer way of life – by far the longest-lasting phase of our existence as humans – and began to settle down in villages devoted to planting and grazing. Then five or six thousand years ago we began adopting the radical social, political, cultural and technological shift required by the great classical civilizations. It could even be argued that half a millennium ago in the West, we once more reinvented ourselves in the transition from the Middle Ages to the modern period.

If we are to reinvent ourselves still again, we will need a radical change of perspective: the recognition (or rather rediscovery) that the Earth, the living biosphere, is primary, and that the human – despite its noble calling and its transcendent destiny – is derivative.

This acknowledgement, along with the necessary reorientation of all our actions and priorities, must inspire us to radically transform our current institutions – be they economic, social, juridical or religious.

Economic and political systems

Perhaps the most obvious problem is our industrial economies, which in their pursuit of unlimited growth are fouling the air, the rivers and the seas while at the same time poisoning our soils. And as we all know, they are creating a hothouse phenomenon recognized by the overwhelming majority of researchers as the most immediate threat to the planet and its inhabitants.

Under the control of an infinitesimally small technical and commercial elite, contemporary transnational corporations treat the natural world merely as a source of raw materials to be put at the service of a human “progress” that is turning out to be as illusory as it is destructive.

Similarly, our juridical systems are in need of drastic revamping. They most frequently support democratic political systems based on the concept of human rights. On examination, however, they serve to legitimate the plunder of the Earth by humankind. Like the Northern liberal democracies that economically exploit the poorer countries of the South, they treat human goals – often trivial or selfish ones – as more important than the integrity of the Earth community.

An example of this is our division of the planet into political units. Our national and regional boundaries fail to even minimally respect the natural bioregional units – such as forests, wetlands, watersheds, tundra, steppes and deserts – which Earth has long since configured to govern itself and to ensure that their respective life forms flourish.

Educational and cultural establishments

Rather than teaching the younger generation to revere living systems and share in their care and cultivation, our educational institutions prepare young people to participate in the very corporations that are devastating ecosystems worldwide.

Our communications media aim to mesmerize entire cultures, promoting the illusion of an unlimited consumerism that is bringing the planet close to ecological collapse. Even societies such as China and India, with their high traditions and ancestral wisdom, appear to be succumbing.

Our languages themselves exhibit an anthropocentric bias. In some sense, we are challenged to reinvent even them. We will need a multivalent speech that focuses on the Earth and on life itself – a language that heightens our sensitivity to the multiplicity of non-human forms of expression.

In pursuing this task, we have much to learn from the planet’s native peoples. Since time immemorial they have listened to and learned from the voices of the mountains, the rivers, the birds, the animals – and even the stars in the heavens.

“This we know,” declared the renowned Chief Seattle of the Skokomish: “The Earth does not belong to humanity; humans belong to the Earth. Whatever befalls the earth befalls the children of the earth. We did not weave the web of life; we are merely a strand in it. Whatever we do to the web, we do to ourselves.” Perhaps we need to question our understanding of change itself. To what extent will a new way of life arise from the never-ending ups and downs of political and social struggle? Is it really worthwhile to go on squabbling over the distribution of what are, in large measure, spoils appropriated from the exploitation of the Earth?

Clearly enough, any movement for change will contain elements of social activism – or class struggle, as Marx aptly put it. However, there are other factors that may be of comparable importance. For instance, the transition from the Middle Ages to modern society arose largely out of the emergence of new ideas and allurements. More than anything else, the new was born of compelling, affect-laden images.

David Korten, author of *When Corporations Rule the World*, clearly acknowledges the importance of social and political movements. At the same time he calls for deep changes in cultural values. “The task ahead... is both simple and profound. We must transform societies dedicated to the love of money into societies dedicated to the love of life.” If we seek real change, perhaps we need turn to resources such as imagination and dreams, which are perhaps the deepest wellsprings of human motivation.

AMOS AND THE HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE BIBLE

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Devouring Locusts: the consumption of grasshoppers

If we want to know what the Bible says about social justice and human rights, we must read about the prophet, Amos. He was an extraordinary person: the first to dare to prophesy to the people (the previous prophets spoke only to certain individuals), the first to criticize social corruption; the first to announce the destruction of a country, and the first whose sermons were written in the Bible.

He was born in Tekoa, a village of Judah, 20 kilometers south of Jerusalem. He was a shepherd and grew fig trees (Am 1:1, 7:14, and throughout the whole book). One day in the year 750 B.C., while tending to his herd, he had a vision: a plague of grasshoppers invading the country, devouring everything. Amos figured it must be an announcement of a divine catastrophe and cried: Please, Lord, forgive us. God answered him: Okay, it won't happen (7:1-3).

Weeks later, he had another vision: a rain of fire fell onto the earth, seas were drying and the country was burning. Amos cried again: Stop Lord, please. God replied: Very well, that will be stopped (7:4-6).

Since that day, he was very upset and wondered why he saw those strange images. One night, he saw a third vision: a man with a carpenter's plumb line to test if a wall was straight. When God asked him: What do you see, Amos? He responded: A plumb line. God said to him: with this I'm going to measure whether the behaviour of my people (Israel) is right. I am not going to forgive anymore (7:7-9). Amos realized that the wall (representing the people of Israel) was crooked, and the collapse was inevitable. As a result, he did not intervene again.

When the lion roars

The country to which God was referring was Israel and Amos also understood why. The country was in one of its most prosperous stages; Apparently, King Jeroboam II had managed an unprecedented "economic miracle". Agriculture was thriving; the vines flourished, livestock production had doubled, the textile industry was doing well, increasing commerce, and the capital of Samaria had transformed into an opulent city. In that city, King Jeroboam II began building palaces and luxurious houses that had never been seen before.

The international political situation also helped; The neighboring countries (Damascus, Assyria, Egypt) were in crises, and this allowed Israel to live in peace and tranquility. Even the religious life was favored with magnificent shrines, one of which was in the city of Bethel and was the national pride.

But such wellbeing had not been achieved without serious violations of human rights. While the ruling class increased their wealth, built lavish mansions, and organized splendid banquets, many people were subject to misery. There were huge social inequalities and a brutal gap between the rich and poor. The peasants were at the mercy of the lenders who exposed them to mortgages (indentures and usury) and seizures. Traders/businessmen took advantage of/used the people, thereby/which distorting (falsified) checks and balances. The judges accepted bribes and resorted to legal games. The government did nothing to correct these serious injustices.

As Amos pondered these things, he felt that God was calling him to direct the kingdom of Israel by announcing the catastrophe. How embarrassing a situation to be in! He, a citizen of the kingdom of Judah, has to go to another country and made a devastating announcement. He thought for a moment to say no to God, but he felt a fire which devoured him inside, and a deafening roar which threatened his ears. It is not easy to reject a divine order, and so, he accepted the calling to be a prophet. Later, he said: when the lion roars, who will not fear? When the Lord speaks, who can but prophesize? (3:8)

Displaying the neighbors

Amos left for Samaria, the capital of the kingdom of Israel. Upon arriving at the market, he found a crowd packing the market square. He found a high place for himself, where everyone could see him well, and he began to speak.

He chose to address the issue indirectly. Instead of beginning to criticize Israel, he began by criticizing the neighboring countries. He brought up Damascus for invading someone else's land, Philistia, for trading slaves, Phoenicia for their lack of friendliness, Edom for hating their neighbors, Ammon for cruelty in war, Moab for dishonoring the dead, and Judah for its idola-

Translation by Alejandro Sheppard

try.(1:3-2:5). People, after hearing it, became excited. Each sentence resulted in the nod of a head and with applause for approval.

But then Amos sprung the topic of his message hidden against the Israelites: And now to you!! Because you have committed as many crimes as them. You sell the innocent for money and the needy for a pair of sandals; you all oppress and humiliate the weak; you corrupt the humble; you want does not belong to you; you pray to idols and then go to the temple to take wine bought with other peoples' money (2:6-16).

Scandal in the plaza

His words echoed like a bomb in the market and the climate became tense. The auditorium was silenced. Little by little, people left him alone in the middle of the square. But Amos was not discouraged and he returned the next day, with a message even more harsh, this time, against the women of the high society: "Listen to this, cows of Bashan, who oppress the poor, mistreat the needy, and order their husbands bring wine to drink. God swears: they, and their children will be carried away on hooks. They will be in a ditch, among the rubble and the faeces" (4:1-3). For several weeks he continued with his criticism. He complained about the local police and their violent methods (Am 3:9-10), the corrupt judges (6:12), the dishonest lawyers (5:7), the authorities for accepting bribes (5:12), the government employees, who were complicit (6:1), the loan sharks (5:11), the rich with their lavish, superficial lifestyles(6:4-6), the false witnesses (8:14), the powerful exploiting the weak (8:4), the unscrupulous businessmen and the immoral traders (8:5-6) and the young people who seemed to only care about their bodies (8:13); all those who infringe the rights of the poor.

Expelled by a priest

However, it was all for naught; his words were not heard. Then he turned to the city of Bethel where there was the famous royal shrine. A day of celebration arrived. The Temple was full of pilgrims who presented their offerings with songs and music. Amos stood in front of the entrance and exclaimed, God says: I hate these religious celebrations; they make me feel sick! I can't stand the offerings in my honor; I don't accept the fat calves you have sacrificed. Cease to sing for me. I want there to be social justice and for you all to practice honesty (5:21-24).

With these allegations, Amos struck to the core of the kingdom. He challenged too much. And what happened next was inevitable. Amaziah, the chief of the priests, called the prophet and warned him: Get out of here. If you want to continue prophesying, go to Judah; but not here, at Bethel: it is the sanctuary of the king. Despite the threats, Amos continued prophesizing until he had a final vision: a devastating earthquake followed by a military invasion (9:1-4). He understood that there was nothing more he could do; the end was near. His career as a prophet was over and he returned to his own country. One evening in the year 721 B.C., while he was tending his sheep in his village, he the reverberations of a fierce military invasion reached him: the Assyrians had stormed Samaria and deported the population. His predictions had been come true.

See what cannot be seen

No one ever before had announced a catastrophe of such magnitude against Israel. That is why his words were impressive and years later were collected in a book, today preserved in the Bible.

Amos had discovered how social injustices, institutionalized lies, indifference to the suffering of others, and the religious hypocrisy has eaten into the foundations of society and pulled down the citizen structure. But his courage was the largest when he announced the tragedy precisely when no one else said anything, when there was only prosperity, luxury and economic stability in a kingdom that was passing through the best years of its history.

This is because Amos had the gift of seeing where nobody else saw. To understand that the seemingly favorable situations are fallacious when they are built on the poverty of many as well as the martyrdom of the dispossessed is important. There can be no religiosity without ethics, and that there is no ethics without social justice. The Church, in preserving his book within the Bible, preserved also an explosive invitation for their readers; an invitation to be able to see beyond what everyone else saw. To find, in the seeming calm of social norms, the possibilities of storms that lie ahead. To uncover the tragedies that lie underneath and denounce society: the dishonesty of politicians, the corruption of judges, the authorities - rings of officials, the exploitation of the rich, the violence of the powerful, the hypocrisy of many religions. This is the current foreign invasion, which has not been punished by the shame of destruction.

WHAT CAN BUDDHISM CONTRIBUTE TO THE SOCIAL JUSTICE?

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The highest ideal of the Western tradition has been to restructure our societies so that they are more just. The most important goal for Buddhism is to awaken (*the Buddha* means “the Awakened”) and realize our true nature. Today it has become obvious that we need both: not just because these ideals complement each other, but because each project needs the other.

The Western conception of justice begins with the Hebrew prophets, who criticized oppressive rulers for afflicting the poor and powerless. In contrast, the Buddhist doctrine of *karma* understands something like justice as an impersonal moral law of the universe: sooner or later (maybe in a future lifetime) everyone gets what they deserve. This has often encouraged passivity and acceptance of one’s situation, rather than the pursuit of social justice.

The Abrahamic emphasis on justice, in combination with the Greek realization that society can be restructured, has resulted in our modern concern to promote social justice by reforming political and economic institutions. But even the best possible economic and political system will not function well if the people within that system are motivated by greed, aggression, and delusion—the “three poisons” that need to be transformed into generosity, loving-kindness, and wisdom.

Good vs. Evil

The Abrahamic religions focus on ethical behavior. The fundamental issue is *good vs. evil*: doing what God wants us to do (in which case we will be rewarded) and not doing what he does not want us to do (to avoid punishment).

Even the *Genesis* story of Adam and Eve—which seems to me a myth about the development of self-consciousness—is understood as an *act of disobedience* against God: we still suffer because of an original sin by our ancestors. Later God sends a great flood that destroys everyone except those in Noah’s ark, because people are not living in the way He wants them to. Later God gives the Ten Commandments to Moses. Jesus emphasizes loving one another, yet this does not reduce the importance of living according to God’s commands.

Although many people no longer believe in an Abrahamic God, the duality between good and evil remains our favorite story (think of James Bond, Star Wars, Harry Potter, every TV crime series). From a Buddhist perspective, however, *good vs. evil* is problematic, because their interdependence means that we do not know what good is until we know what evil is, and to be good is to *struggle against* that evil. Hence inquisitions, witchcraft and heresy trials, and, more recently, the War on Terror. What was the difference between Osama bin Laden and George W. Bush? They were not only polar opposites but mirror images: both fighting the same Holy War of Good against Evil, each leading the forces of goodness in a struggle against the forces of evil, because that is what the forces of good are supposed to do.

The War on Terror illustrates the tragic paradox: historically, one of the main causes of evil has been our attempt to destroy (what we understand as) evil. What was Hitler trying to do? Eliminate the evil elements that pollute the world: Jews, homosexuals, Roma gypsies, etc. Stalin attempted to do the same with the *kulaks*, and the Khmer Rouge in Cambodia with anyone who was educated.

There is, however, also a beneficial aspect of the duality between good and evil, which brings us back to Hebrew prophets such as Amos and Isaiah. Speaking truth to power, on behalf of God, the prophets call for social justice for the oppressed.

The other source of Western civilization is classical Greece, which realized that human institutions are not pre-determined in the way that nature is: so we can reorganize our society to make it better (for example, more democratic). Bringing together the Hebrew concern for social justice with the Greek realization that society can be restructured has resulted in what seems to me the highest ideal of the West, actualized in revolutions, reform and human rights movements, etc.

Nevertheless, our societies have not become socially just, and in some ways they are becoming more unjust. An obvious economic example is the growing gap between rich and poor in most places. One obvious response is that our economic system is still un-

just because wealthy people and powerful corporations manipulate our political systems. So we need to keep working for a more equitable economic system, and for a democratic process free of such distortions.

I wouldn't challenge that explanation, but is it sufficient? Is the basic difficulty that our economic and political institutions are not structured well enough to avoid such manipulations, or is it also the case that they *cannot* be structured well enough—in other words, that we cannot rely only on an institutional solution to structural injustice? Can we create a social order so perfect that it will function well regardless of the individual motivations of the people within it? Do we also need personal transformation?

Perhaps this helps us to understand why so many political revolutions have ended up replacing one gang of thugs with another gang. And there is plenty of evidence that democracy does not work very well if it simply becomes a different system for certain individuals and groups to manipulate and exploit. That brings us to the Buddhist focus on personal transformation.

Ignorance vs. Awakening

Of course, moral behavior is also important in Buddhism, most obviously the five precepts: to avoid hurting living beings, stealing, lying, improper sexual behavior, and drugs that cloud the mind. But since for Buddhism there is no God telling us we must live this way, they are important because living according to them means that the circumstances of our own lives will naturally improve. They are exercises in mindfulness, to train ourselves in a certain way.

That is because for Buddhism the fundamental issue is not *good vs. evil*, but *delusion vs. awakening*. In principle, someone who has awakened to the true nature of the world (including the true nature of oneself) no longer needs to follow an external moral code because he or she *naturally* wants to behave in a way that does not violate the spirit of the precepts.

The Buddha said that what he taught was *dukkha* “suffering” and how to end it. Did he have in mind only individual *dukkha*—resulting from our own thoughts and actions—or did he possibly have a wider social vision that encompassed structural *dukkha*: the suffering caused by oppressive rulers and unjust institutions? Some scholars have argued that the Buddha may have intended to start a movement that would transform society, rather than merely establish a monastic order. Certainly his attitudes toward women and

caste were extraordinarily progressive for his day.

In either case, early Buddhism as an institution soon came to an accommodation with the state, relying to some extent on royal support. But if you want to be supported by the powers-that-be, you'd better support the powers-that-be. Because no Asian Buddhist society was democratic, that placed limits on what types of *dukkha* Buddhist teachers could emphasize. The tradition as it developed could not address structural *dukkha*—for example, the exploitative policies of many rulers—that ultimately could only be resolved by some institutional transformation. On the contrary, the karma-and-rebirth teaching could easily be used to legitimate the power of kings, who must be reaping the fruits of their benevolent actions in past lifetimes, and to rationalize the disempowerment of those born poor or disabled.

The result was that Buddhism has focused on the spiritual development of the individual. Today, however, globalizing Buddhism finds itself in a new situation, in most places no longer subject to oppressive governments, and we also have a much better understanding of the structural and institutional causes of *dukkha*. This opens the door to expanded possibilities for the tradition, which can now develop more freely the social implications of its basic perspective.

Conclusion

Another way to express the relationship between the Western ideal of social transformation (social justice that addresses social *dukkha*) and the Buddhist goal of personal transformation (an awakening that addresses individual *dukkha*) is different types of *freedom*. The emphasis of the modern West has been on personal freedom from oppressive institutions. The emphasis of Buddhism has been on “psycho-spiritual” freedom. Freedom for the self, or freedom from the (ego)self? What have I gained if I am free from external control but still at the mercy of my own greed, aggression, and delusions? And awakening from the delusion of a separate self will not by itself free us from the *dukkha* caused by an exploitative economic system and an oppressive government.

Again, we need to actualize both ideals to be truly free. Today—thanks to globalization, air travel, and digital communications—these two worldviews, with different but not conflicting ideals, are learning from each other. They need each other. More precisely, we need both.

PREMIO ANTONIO MONTESINOS AL GESTO PROFÉTICO EN DEFENSA DE LOS DERECHOS HUMANOS

XIXª Edición

OTORGADO A MONS. ERWIN KRÄUTLER

Obispo de Xingú, cumplió 75 años el 12 de julio de 2014. Si Austria es su patria, desde 1965 Brasil y la Iglesia del Xingú y Altamira son su *matria*, donde ha pasado más de la mitad de su vida. Quien conoce la vida de Mons. Erwin sabe que la Causa de los pueblos indígenas –y por extensión, la Causa de los pobres– es la Causa de su vida. En cuatro períodos ha sido elegido presidente del Consejo Indigenista Misionero (CIMI). Esto no le ha traído ventajas, honores o ascensos, sino credibilidad entre sus colegas obispos, el respeto de los políticos y la estima del pueblo sencillo y de la Iglesia misionera.

Erwin Kräutler, Misionero de la Sangre de Cristo c.pp.s., viene de la gran aflicción; es hermano de aquellos que lavaron sus túnicas en la sangre del Cordero (cf. Ap 7,14), en la Transamazónica, en un accidente forjado por los enemigos de la causa indígena, en las luchas por una Constitución ciudadana, en la denuncia de abusos de menores por parte de elementos de élite de Altamira, en las advertencias contra los efectos mortales de la construcción de la hidroeléctrica de Belo Monte, y en la defensa de la Amazonia contra la invasión del gran capital. Incluso hoy, D. Erwin, está amenazado de muerte y es acompañado las 24 horas por dos guardas que el Estado le asignó, para vigilarlo más que protegerlo.

En la mística de la militancia misionera de cada día, D. Erwin procura romper la lógica del sistema: contra la exclusión propone la participación, contra la acumulación, el compartir, y contra la explotación, la gratuidad, que apunta a la posibilidad de un mundo para todos. Con su báculo de obispo llama en puertas cerradas, con su voz de pastor convoca a sus guerreros Kayapó y despierta en el pueblo la esperanza de que los muros van a caer.

OTORGADO AL P. ÓSCAR JIMÉNEZ LASO

Óscar JIMÉNEZ es un chileno y jesuita que durante sus más de 80 años de vida se ha destacado por su espíritu solidario, respeto a las personas, pensamiento y acción tolerantes. Siempre ha realizado sus actividades en sectores populares, promoviendo «el paso de condiciones menos humanas a condiciones más humanas», siguiendo el Evangelio de Jesús.

Tras el golpe militar de 1973, Óscar Jiménez dedicó toda su energía a la defensa de la vida de los pobres, a la promoción cultural y educacional de los jóvenes y a otras muchas actividades. Óscar Jiménez no tuvo temor de arriesgar su vida al participar directamente en la protección de personas perseguidas, fomentó la formación política y moral incorporada a la dimensión evangelizadora y el aporte de la dimensión política de la fe cristiana a la rearticulación del tejido social y de los partidos políticos en la clandestinidad.

Hay quienes afirman que la dictadura que asoló Chile fue derrocada «con un lápiz y un papel» en el plebiscito de 1988. Olvidan a quienes en silencio, en secreto, arriesgando sus vidas –y centenares perdiéndola–, lucharon abiertamente contra el poder opresor. El retorno al sistema electoral democrático-burgués ha caminado sobre los cadáveres de la resistencia y el generoso silencio de los luchadores que no han sido reconocidos por las nuevas autoridades.

El padre Oscar es uno de los héroes olvidados por quienes hoy ejercen poder en Chile, pero no por el pueblo que él defendió y que lo reconoce como uno de los suyos, continuando su misión profética y liberadora en la Comisión Ética contra la Tortura (CECT-Chile), el Comité Oscar Romero (SICSAL-Chile) y otras entidades que cuentan con su testimonio de auténtico sacerdote de Cristo liberador.

El Premio Antonio Montesinos también ha sido concedido este año a la Revista Alternativas y la Fundación Verapaz, de Nicaragua, esforzadas patrocinadoras de este premio durante veinte años, contribuyendo a mantener encendida la llama de la pasión latinoamericana por los Derechos Humanos. Felicitaciones por esa misión cumplida, tan latinoamericana, desde que la inaugurara la figura señera de Montesinos.

2015: UN INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF...

...OF SOILS

«The General Assembly,

Noting that soils constitute the foundation for agricultural development, essential ecosystem functions and food security and hence are key to sustaining life on Earth,

Recognizing that the sustainability of soils is key to addressing the pressures of a growing population and that recognition, advocacy and support for promoting sustainable management of soils can contribute to healthy soils and thus to a food-secure world and to stable and sustainably used ecosystems,

Recognizing also the urgent need at all levels to raise awareness and to promote sustainability of the limited soil resources using the best available scientific information and building on all dimensions of sustainable development,

Noting that these celebrations can contribute to raising awareness of desertification, land degradation and drought, in line with the objective of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, particularly in Africa

Decides to designate 5 December as World Soil Day and to declare 2015 the International Year of Soils;

Invites all Member States, the organizations of the United Nations system and other international and regional organizations, as well as civil society, non-governmental organizations and individuals, to observe World Soil Day and the International Year of Soils, as appropriate;

Invites Governments, relevant regional and international organizations, non-governmental organizations, the private sector and other relevant stakeholders to make voluntary contributions for the observance of World Soil Day and the International Year of Soils;

Requests the Secretary-General to bring the present resolution to the attention of all Member States in order to encourage them to carry out activities to commemorate World Soil Day and the International Year of Soils.

Resoluciones A/C.2/68/L.21 y A/C.2/68/L.52

...OF LIGHT AND LIGHT-BASED TECHNOLOGIES

«The General Assembly,

Considering that the applications of light science and technology are vital for existing and future advances in medicine, energy, information and communications, fibre optics, astronomy, architecture, archaeology, entertainment and culture, and that light-based technologies directly respond to the needs of humankind, in the context of ongoing discussions related to the definition of the post-2015 development agenda, by providing access to information and increasing societal health and well-being,

Considering also that technology and design can play an important role in the achievement of greater energy efficiency and the preservation of dark skies, as well as in the reduction of light pollution and energy waste,

Noting that the year 2015 coincides with the anniversaries of a series of important milestones in the history of the science of light, including the works on optics by Ibn Al-Haytham in 1015, the notion of light as a wave proposed by Fresnel in 1815, the electromagnetic theory of light propagation proposed by Maxwell in 1865, Einstein's theory of the photoelectric effect in 1905 and of the embedding of light in cosmology through general relativity in 1915, and the discovery of the cosmic microwave background by Penzias and Wilson in 1965,

Considering... a particular emphasis on promoting science education among young people and women, especially in developing countries,

Decides to declare 2015 the International Year of Light and Light-based Technologies;

Encourages all States, the United Nations system and all other actors to take advantage of the International Year to promote actions at all levels, including through international cooperation, and to increase awareness among the public of the importance of light science, optics and light-based technologies and of promoting widespread access to new knowledge and related activities;

A/68/440/Add.2

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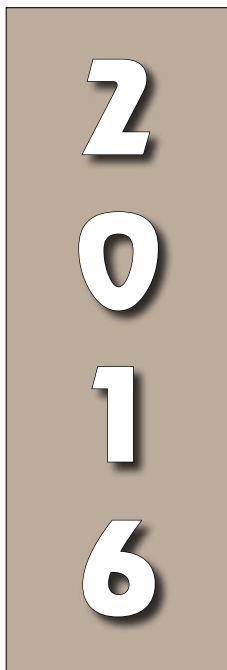
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Latin American Agenda



January'2016						
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February						
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June						
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July						
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August						
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September						
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9 F	9 M	9 M
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12 M	12 T	12 T
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14 W	14 S	14 S
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16 F	16 M	16 M
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2015

April

May

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July

August

September

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9 T	9 S	9 W
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16 T	16 S	16 W
17 F	17 M	17 T
18 S	18 T	18 F
19 S	19 W	19 S
20 M	20 T	20 S
21 T	21 F	21 M
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23 T	23 S	23 W
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2015

October

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December

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2015

December 2014

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Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday
29 Lunes	30 Martes	31 Miercoles	1 Jueves
5	6	7	8
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M T W T F S S February

January

[illegible]

Year 2015 by **Gregorian** calendar. Year 6728 in the **Julian** calendar.

Year 5775 in the **Jewish** Era (5776 begins on Sept. 15, 2014).

Islamic year 1436 of the Hijri calendar (began on Oct. 25, 2014; the year 1437 begins Oct. 14, 2015).

There is a Gregorian-Hijri Dates Converter at www.islamicfinder.org/dateConversion.php

Chinese year 4711-4712. Year 2768 *ab Urbe condita*. Buddhist year 2581. Armenian year 1464.



1 Thursday

Num 6,22-27 / Ps 66 / Gal 4, 4-7 /
Lk 2,16-21

1508: The colonization of Puerto Rico begins.
1804: Haiti becomes world's first Black republic. National holiday.
1959: Victory of the Cuban revolution.
1977: Mauricio López, Rector of the University of Mendoza, Argentina, member of the World Council of Churches, disappeared.
1990: Maureen Courtney and Teresa Rosales, Religious women, assassinated by U.S.-backed Contras in Nicaragua.
1994: NAFTA comes into effect. Indigenous campesinos stage Zapatista uprising in Chiapas, Mexico.
2003: Lula takes office as President in Brazil.

International Day of Peace

2 Friday

1Jn 2,22-28 / Ps 97
Jn 1,19-28

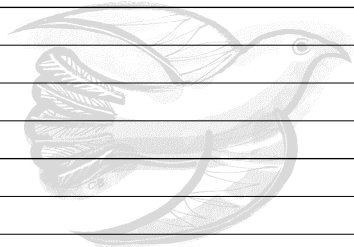
Basil the Great
Gregory of Nazienzen
J.K. Wilhelm Loehe
1904: US Marines land in the Dominican Republic to "protect U.S. interests."
1979: Francisco Jentel, defender of Indigenous peoples and campesinos, victim of Brazilian security forces.
1981: José Manuel de Souza «Zé Piau», worker, victim of the «grileiros» in Pará, Brazil.
1994: Daniel Arrollano dies, devoted guardian of the memory of Argentinean martyrs.

3 Saturday

1Jn 2,29-3,6 / Ps 97
Jn 1,29-34

Genevieve
1511: Agüeybaná, 'El Bravo', leads a rebellion of the Taino people against Spanish occupiers in Puerto Rico, the 'Cry of Coayuco'.
1981: Diego Quic, Popular Indigenous leader, catechist, disappeared, Guatemala.
1994: Antulio Parrilla Bonilla dies, bishop who fought for Puerto Rican independence and the cause of the persecuted, the "Las Casas" of Puerto Rico.

JANUARY



Rigoberto

Epiphany
Isa 60,1-6 / Ps 71
Eph 3,2-6 / Mt 2,1-12

1493: Columbus expedition begins return voyage with up to 25 kidnapped Indigenous people.
1975: José Patricio Leon, "Pato", a Young Christian Student leader in Chile, is disappeared.
2005: The Supreme Court authorizes the trial of Pinochet for Operation Condor.
2010: The United Arab Emirates complete the *Burj Dubai*, the highest building in the world, 818 meters, 370 more than the *Taipei 101*.

5 Monday

Telesfor and Emiliana
Kaj Munk

1Jn 3,22-4,6 / Ps 2
Mt 4,12-17.23-25

1534: Guarocuya, "Enriquillo," Christian leader in La Española (Dominican Republic) rebels in defense of his people.

1785: Spanish Queen Mary I orders the suppression of all Brazilian industry except that of clothing for slaves.

2007: Axel Mencos, hero of the Guatemalan resistance and the steadfast church, dies.

Full Moon: 04h53m (UTC) in Cancer



6 Tuesday

Gaspar, Melchior and Balthasar

1848: The Guarani are declared Paraguayan citizens by decree of Carlos A. López.

1915: Agrarian reform in Mexico, fruit of the revolution, first distribution of landholdings in Latin America.

1927: To combat Sandino, American troops occupy Nicaragua. They will leave only in 1933.

1982: Victoria de la Roca, a Guatemalan Religious who worked for the poor, is disappeared.

1986: Julio González, bishop of Puno, Peru, dies in a suspicious accident.

1992: Augusto Maria and Augusto Conte, human rights activists, are martyred in Argentina.

1Jn 4,7-10 / Ps 71
Mk 6,34-44

7 Wednesday

Raymond of Penafort

1835: Victory of Cabanagem, Brazil. Rebels take Belem and govern the province.

1981: Sebastião Mearim, rural leader in Para, Brazil, assassinated by «grileiros».

1983: Felipe and Mary Barreda, Christian revolutionary activists, are assassinated by U.S. backed Contras in Nicaragua.

1999: Barotomé Carrasca Briseño dies, bishop of Oaxaca, Mexico, defender of the poor and of Indigenous people.

1Jn 4,11-18 / Ps 71
Mk 6,45-52

8

Thursday

1Jn 4,19-5,4 / Ps 71

Severino

Lk 4,14-22a

1454: Pope Nicholas authorizes the enslavement of any African nation by the king of Portugal as long as the people are baptized.

1642: Galileo Galilei dies, condemned by the Inquisition. The Vatican will "rehabilitate" him 350 years later.

1850: Juan, leader of the Queimado revolution is hanged in Espírito Santo, Brazil.

1912: Founding of the African National Congress.

1982: Domingo Cahuec Sic, an indigenous Achi delegate of the Word, is killed by the military in Rabinal, Guatemala.

9

Friday

1Jn 5,5-13 / Ps 147

Lk 5,12-16 Aldo

Eulogio, Julián, Basilia

1662: Authorities in Lisbon order the extermination of the Janduim Indians in Brazil.

1858: First known strike in Brazil, by typographers, pioneers of workers' struggles there.

1959: Rigoberta Menchú is born Chimel, Guatemala.

10

Saturday

1Jn 5,14-21 / Ps 149

Jn 3,22-30

1911: Five month strike by the shoemakers of São Paulo, for an 8 hour day.

1920: The League of Nations is created following the massacres of the First World War.

1978: Pedro Joaquin Chamorro is assassinated, journalist who fought for civil liberties against the Somoza dictatorship in Nicaragua.

1982: Dora Azmitia «Menchy», 23 years old, teacher, martyr to young Catholic students, Guatemala.

1985: Ernesto Fernández Espino, a Lutheran pastor, martyred.

January

11

Baptism of the Lord

Isa 42,1-4-6.7 / Ps 28

Acts 10,34-38 / Mk 1,7-11

Higinio, Martín de León

1839: Eugenio Maria de Hostos is born, advocate for Puerto Rican independence and Caribbean confederation.

2005: Raul Castro Bocel, campesino anti-mining activist, killed by Guatemalan authorities.

12 Monday

Heb 1,1-6 / Ps 96

Mk 1,14-20

Benedict, Tatiana

1694: 6500 men begin the siege of Palmares that will last until February 6.

1948: The United States Supreme Court proclaims the equality of blacks and whites in schools.

1970: Nigerian Civil War ends with the surrender of Biafra.

13 Tuesday

Hilary, George Fox

1825: Frei Caneca, republican revolutionary and hero of Ecuadorian Confederation, shot.

1879: Roca begins the desert campaign in Patagonia Argentina.

1893: U.S. Marines land in Hawaii to impose a constitution, stripping monarchical authority and disenfranchising the Indigenous poor.

2001: Earthquake in El Salvador, 7.9 on the Richter scale, 1200 dead, 4200 disappeared.

Last quarter: 09h46m (UTC) in Libra



14 Wednesday

Heb 2,5-12 / Ps 8

Mk 1,21-28

Fulgence

1988: Miguel Angel Pavón, director of the Honduran Human Rights Commission, and Moisés Landaverde are assassinated.

1997: 700,000 South Korean strikers march on behalf of social rights.

Heb 2,14-18 / Ps 104

Mk 1,29-39



15 Thursday

Heb 3,7-14 / Ps 94

Mk 1,40-45

Efiso

- 1919: Rosa Luxemburg, revolutionary social philosopher, killed following an unsuccessful revolt in Berlin.
- 1929: Martin Luther King Jr. born in Atlanta, Georgia, USA.
- 1970: Leonel Rugama dies in the revolutionary struggle against the Somoza dictatorship.
- 1976: The government of Bahia (Brazil) suppresses the police records of the Candomblés.
- 1981: Estela Pajuelo Grimaldi, campesina, 55 years old, 11 children, martyr to solidarity, Peru.
- 1982: The Constitution of Canada acknowledges the rights of First Nations.
- 1990: Collapse of the Brazilian currency.

16 Friday

Heb 4,1-5.11 / Ps 77

Mk 2,1-12

Marcel

- 1899: Treaty of Berlin divided Samoan Archipelago between Germany and the USA, usurping traditional rulers.
- 1992: Chapultepec Peace Accords end 12 year civil war in El Salvador.

World Day against Child Slavery

In memory of Iqbal Mashib, a child slave who, with the support of the Liberation Front of Pakistan Workers, closed several factories employing child slaves (solidaridad.net).

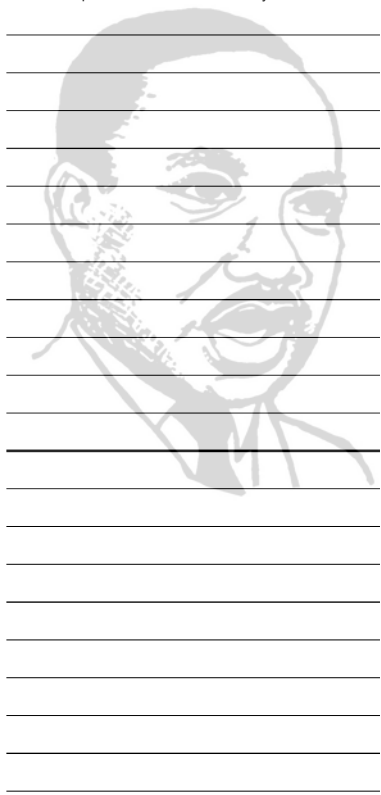
17 Saturday

Heb 4,12-16 / Ps 18

Mk 2,13-17

Anthony Abbot

- 1961: Patrice Lumumba, African independence hero, murdered.
- 1981: Ana M. Castillo, militant Salvadoran Christian murdered.
- 1981: Silvia Maribel Arriola, nurse, first Religious martyr in the Salvadoran revolution.
- 1988: Jaime Restrepo López, priest, martyr for the cause of the poor, Colombia.
- 1991: The Persian Gulf War begins.
- 1994: Earthquake in Los Angeles.
- 1996: Juan Luis Segundo, liberation theologian dies Uruguay.
- 2010: Earthquake in Haiti, 7.3 on the Richter scale. More than 250,000 dead, plus total destruction.
- 2010: A commission in the Netherlands concludes that the invasion of Irak in 2003 was illegal.



18

Second Sunday in Ordinary Time

1Sam 3,3b-10.19 / Ps 39

1Cor 6,13c-15a.17-20 / Jn 1,35-42

Beatrice, Prisca

The confession of Peter

- 1535: Founding of the City of Kings, (Lima).
- 1867: Rubén Darío is born in Metapa, Nicaragua.
- 1978: Germán Cortés, Christian activist, a martyr for the cause of justice in Chile.
- 1981: José Eduardo, union leader in Acre, Brazil, contracted murder.
- 1982: Sergio Bertén, Belgian Religious, and companions are martyred because of their solidarity with Guatemalan peasants.

19 Monday

Heb 5,1-10 / Ps 109

Mario, Martha
Henry of Upsala

1897: Battle of Tabuleirinho: the *sertanejos* stop the Army
3 kms. Outside Canudos, Brasil.

1817: An army under General José de San Martín crosses
the Andes from Argentina to liberate Chile from
Spanish rule.

1969: Jan Palach, a Czech student, dies after immolat-
ing himself as a political protest against Soviet
occupation.

Mk 2,18-22

20 Tuesday

Heb 6,10-20 / Ps 110

Fabian and Sebastian

1973: Amílcar Cabral, anti-colonial leader in Guinea Bissau,
killed by Portuguese police.

1979: Octavio Ortiz, a priest, and four catechists, are killed
by government troops in El Salvador.

1982: Carlos Morales, Dominican, martyr among the
Indigenous campesinos of Guatemala.

2009: Barack Hussein Obama, first Afro-American President
of the United States, takes office.

New Moon: 13h14m (UTC) in Aquarius



21 Wednesday

Heb 7,1-3.15-17 / Ps 109

Agnes

1972: Gerardo Valencia Cano, bishop of Buenaventura
(Colombia), prophet and martyr for liberation.

1974: Campesinos of Valle Alto, Bolivia are martyred.

1980: María Ercilia and Ana Coralía Martínez, students,
Red Cross workers catechists, martyrs in El Salvador.

1984: The Movement of Workers without Land (MST) formed
in Cascavel, Brazil.

2000: Indigenous and popular uprising in Ecuador.



22 Thursday Heb

Heb 7,25-8,6 / Ps 39

Mk 3,7-12 Ildefonse

Vincent

1565: «Tata» Vasco de Quiroga, bishop of Michoacán, precursor of the Indigenous reductions.

1932: Peasant plan to revolt against oppression in El Salvador sparks massive reactionary violence.

1982: Massacre of campesinos from Pueblo Nuevo, Colombia.

2006: Evo Morales, Indigenous Aymara, becomes President of Bolivia.

23 Friday

Heb 8,6-13 / Ps 84

Mk 3,13-19

Ildefonse Mk 3,13-19
1870: 173 Piegan people massacred by U.S. cavalry on the
banks of the Marias River in Montana.

1914: Revolt of the Juazeiro, Brazil. Victory of the sertanejos commanded by P. Cícero.

1958: Fall of the last Venezuelan dictator: General Marcos Pérez Jiménez.

1983: Segundo Francisco Guamán, a Quechua campesino, murdered.

24 Saturday
Feb 9, 2013

Heb 9.2-3.11-14 / Ps 46

Mk 3,20-21

Francis de Sales Mk 3,20-21
1835: Blacks organize an urban revolt in Salvador, Brazil.

1977: Five union lawyers were murdered in their Atocha Street office by neo-fascists in Madrid, Spain.

Street office by neo-fascists in Madrid, Spain.

January

25

Third Sunday in Ordinary Time

Jon 3,1-5,10 / Ps 24

1Cor 7,29-31 / Mk 1,14-20

Conversion of St. Paul

Week of Prayer for Christian Unity

1917: USA buys Danish West Indies for \$25 million.

1919: League of Nations founded at Treaty of Versailles talks following World War I.

1524: The "Twelve Apostles of Mexico" leave Spain, Franciscans.

1554: Founding of São Paulo, Brazil.

1996: Leiland Muir wins forced sterilization case (Canada).

26 Monday

2Tim 1,1-8 / Ps 95

Timothy, Titus and Silas

1500: Vicente Pinzón disembarks in North East Brazil - before Pedro Alvares Cabral.

1813: Juan Pablo Duarte, Dominican Republic's national hero, is born.

1914: José Gabriel, 'Cura Brochero', priest and prophet of Argentina's campesinos, dies.

2001: Earthquake in India: 50,000 victims.

Lk 10,1-9

27 Tuesday

Angela de Merici, Lidia

1554: Pablo de Torres, bishop of Panama, first exile from Latin America, for defending the Indigenous peoples.

1945: The Auschwitz concentration camp in Poland is liberated. Holocaust Memorial Day.

1973: Paris Peace Accords bring the Vietnam War to an end.

1977: Miguel Angel Nicolau, a Salesian priest committed to the youth of Argentina, is disappeared.

Heb 10,1-10 / Ps 39

Mk 3,31-35

28 Wednesday

Heb 10,11-18 / Ps 109

Mk 4,1-20

Thomas Aquinas

1853: José Martí, 'Apostle of Cuban Independence', is born.

1909: US troops leave Cuba after 11 years for the first time since the end of the Spanish American War.

1916: Manitoba women get the vote (Canada).

1979: Puebla Conference begins, Mexico.



First quarter: 04h48m (UTC) in Taurus



29 Thursday

Heb 10,19-25 / Ps 23
Mk 4,21-25

Valero

1863: Shoshone resistance broken by massacre of over 200 people on the Bear River in Idaho by US cavalry.
1895: José Martí, poet and national hero, launches the Cuban war of independence.
1985: First national congress of MST.
1999: The dollar reaches 2.15 reales, critical moment in the fall of the Brazilian currency.
2001: Pinochet is tried as the author of the crimes of the "caravan of death."
2010: Tony Blair testifies before the commission investigating him for his participation in the invasion of Irak in 2003.

30 Friday

Heb 10,32-39 / Ps 36
Mk 4,26-34

Martina

1629: Antônio Raposo, bandit, destroys the Guarani missions of Guaira, P.R., Brazil, and enslaves 4,000 Indigenous persons.
1948: Mahatma Gandhi is assassinated.
1972: Fourteen civil rights marchers are killed on Bloody Sunday in Northern Ireland by British paratroopers.

Non-Violence and Peace Day

31 Saturday

Heb 11,1-2,8-10 / Lk 1
Mk 4,35-41

John Bosco

1865: The 13th amendment to the US Constitution abolishes slavery.
1980: The Spanish Embassy Massacre in Guatemala City – 40 Quichés including Maria Ramirez and Vincente Menchú are killed.

Mahatma Gandhi



1

Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time
Deut 18,15-20 / Ps 94
1Cor 7,32-35 / Mk 1,21-28

Cecilio, Viridiana

1870: Jonathan Jasper Wright is elected to the Supreme Court, the first Black man to reach a position this high in the United States judiciary.
1932: Agustín Farabundo Martí and companions are executed in massive wave of repressive violence in El Salvador.
1977: Daniel Esquivel, pastoral worker with Paraguayan immigrants to Argentina, martyred.

HUMAN RIGHTS AND THE MARKET

PATRUS ANANIAS DE SOUZA

Belo Horizonte, MG, Brazil

The historical construction of human rights—always in a process of growth and affirmation, despite lamentable setbacks—moving so slowly and painfully but also but also expressing humanity's gratifying and hopeful walk in its search for better sentiments, challenges and aspirations.

We have learned through the lessons of life and history, that human rights neither fall from the sky nor sprout from the ground. They are won by groups, social classes and just interested people through their movements, mobilizations and struggles, frequently with the sacrifice of many human lives. With time they bring about the expansion of the conscience and the emergence of new values and paradigms for living together.

Many religious, philosophical and cultural traditions, along with personal and community efforts, join in the theoretical and practical development of these rights. The Christian tradition has made an extraordinary contribution to this process ever since the arrival of Jesus, with his life and teachings, fully integrated and coherent, centred on the dignity of the human person with special attention for and commitment to the poor.

Liberal and contractual ideas, having emerged at the beginning of the sixteenth century and linked to the rise of the bourgeoisie, brought, especially in the eighteenth century with the French Revolution and the *Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen*, individual rights and the first seeds of political rights, pointing to the prospect of democracy. Initially these rights were restricted to the ruling classes who were with the struggles of workers and their allies. The social struggles and new ideas of the 19th century, such as Marxism and social Christianity, brought to the 20th century social, economic and cultural rights, including the expansion of political rights and the social welfare state.

The *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, proclaimed by the United Nations (1948), seeks a synthesis among, individual, political and social

rights. The historic declaration's thirty articles do not oblige States, given the lack of coercive power held by the sovereign nations. Nevertheless, that moral challenge produced good results. Many countries welcomed the directives of the United Nations' charter and included them in their own constitutions and laws and made them obligatory. Human Rights went on to constitute, in the juridical order of these countries, the fundamental rights along with their corresponding duties.

In the words of professor Fábio Konder Comparato: "Contemporary judicial doctrine (...) distinguishes human rights from fundamental rights, to the degree that the latter are precisely the human rights established by the State as the written constitutional regulations." The fundamental rights can be demanded by the administrative and/or judicial order.

Later documents, such as the *Universal Declaration of the Rights of Peoples*, known as *The Charter of Algiers* (1976), gave a more collective dimension to human rights, contextualizing them in international relations, where they raise questions such as the consequences of colonialism, which are manifesting themselves in our own day ever more cruelly; and in the drama of migrants, imperialism, the disparity in commercial relations, the arms race, war....

In this line, Christian tradition and particularly the Catholic Church helped consolidate this new approach that links human rights to national sovereignty, to development and to peace. Worth mentioning in this new paradigmatic approach are the encyclicals *Peace on Earth* by John XXIII (1963), *On the Development of Peoples* by Paul VI, *On Social Concerns* by John Paul II (1987), *On Integral Human Development In Charity and Truth* by Benedict XVI (2009) and, more recently, the Apostolic Exhortation *The Joy of the Gospel* by Pope Francis (2013) which offers strong criticisms of the market and the rule of money.

Translation by Ernie Schibli

In the closing decades of the last century, the affirmation of the rights of individuals, local and international communities encountered powerful resistance, so much more perverse because of its subtleness and ideology. Important historical and civilizing victories were crushed by the neoliberal wave, the new figure of savage and triumphant capitalism, founded on the uncompromising defense of the minimalist state, the complete freedom of the market and of speculative financial capital, social Darwinism with its emphasis on the rule of the strongest and most expert.

Pope Francis in his splendid Exhortation, mentioned above, confronts with new prophetic vigor the 'new idolatry of money.' After denouncing the culture that rejects people, transforming them into consumer goods, that converts the excluded, even more, the exploited, into leftovers and garbage, the Pope denounces the dominant order. He goes on to say: "In this context, some still defend the theories of trickle-down which presupposes that all economic growth, benefitting from the free market, produces greater equity and social inclusion in the world. This opinion, which has never been confirmed by the facts expresses a vague and naïve confidence in the goodness of those who wield economic power and in the almost sacred mechanisms of the reigning economic system. None the less, the excluded continue hoping ... We believe in new idols. The adoration of the old golden calf has given way to a new and cruel version in the fetishism of money and the dictatorship of a faceless economy lacking truly human objectives."

The dictatorial characteristics of the financial market, so well expressed by Pope Francis, manifest themselves by the authoritarian manner of the only way of thinking, which always discredits the arguments of those who question it, and by the intense propaganda, explicit or subliminal, that invades the lives of individuals, families and communities, making it difficult, or even impossible for them to discern the challenges of reality.

The communication media, in a large part financed by agents of the market, attribute human characteristics to it, while at the same time depersonalizing people—the market is nervous, it is calmer, it demands, it determines...

The financial market goes much further than the oscillations and black market of the stock exchange; it contaminates the whole of society through intensive publicity without ethical limits, real brainwashing that creates false needs, exaggerates the consumerism of the richest classes, increases the social inequalities and impacts the natural environment.

Apart from the grave social problems, unresolved and frequently aggravated by the dictatorship of the market, severe environmental problems are on the increase. The Earth Charter, published in the year 2000, both presents a challenge and points the way: "the dominant patterns of production and consumption are causing environmental devastation, scarce resources and a massive extinction of species. Communities are being destroyed... We have to choose: either we forge a global alliance in which we all care for Earth, or we risk our own destruction and the diversity of life. Fundamental changes in our values, institutions and way of living are necessary. Our environmental, economic, political, social and spiritual challenges are all interlinked and together we can come up with inclusive solutions."

In the field of social rights, beyond the historic problems already mentioned, new challenges are emerging related to: the violence in our cities which on a daily basis affects the poor; the abusive use of and trafficking of drugs; human trafficking frequently connected with sexual exploitation, including that of children and adolescents, trafficking for the purpose of illegal adoption and work exploitation, or the trafficking of drugs; migration which creates intolerance in the so-called developed countries; the attacks on the lands and cultures of traditional, indigenous and people of African descent. So many challenges, paths and possibilities! Time for the desert and prophecy!

The hour has arrived for us to reaffirm our radical commitment to life and future generations. It is time for us to reaffirm the promise of Jesus: "I have come that they may have life and have it in its plenitude."

2015

January

M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S
			1	2	3	4	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
5	6	7	8	9	10	11	26	27	28	29	30	31	
12	13	14	15	16	17	18							

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday
26 Lunes	27 Martes	28 Miércoles	29 Jueves
2	3	4	5
9	10	11	12
16	17	18	19
23	24	25	26

2

Monday

Mal 3,1-4 / Ps 23

Presentation of the Lord
1976: José Tedeschi, Worker priest, martyr to those in shantytowns in Argentina
1982: Syrian troops attack Hamas killing thousands of civilians.
1989: Alfredo Stroessner, dictator in Paraguay is removed in a fierce military coup.
1991: Expedito Ribiero de Souza, president of the Brazilian Union of Rural Workers, is assassinated.

3

Tuesday

Heb 12,1-4 / Ps 21

Blas and Oscar
1795: Antonio José de Sucre, South American independence leader, born in Cumaná, Venezuela.
1929: Camilo Torres, Colombian priest and revolutionary, born.
Full Moon: 23h09m (UTC) in Leo

4

Wednesday

Heb 12,4-7.11-15 / Ps 102

Andrés Corsino
1794: Liberation of the slaves in Haiti. The first abolitionist law in Latin America.
1927: The Prestes Column takes refuge in Bolivia.
1979: Benjamín Didincué, Colombian indigenous leader, martyred for his defense of the land.
1979: Six workers killed and dozens injured in police attack on the Cromotex factory in Lima, Peru.
1981: The Massacre of Chimaltenango (Guatemala). 68 campesinos are killed.
1992: An attempted State coup in Venezuela.

World-wide Week for Inter-religious Harmony (UN)
(first week of February)



5

Thursday

Heb 12.18-19.21-24 / Ps 47

Mk 6.7-13

Águeda

1883: Beginning of movement for 40 hour week (Canada).

1977: The Somocist police destroy the contemplative community of Solentiname, a community committed to the Nicaraguan revolution.

1988: Francisco Domingo Ramos, labor leader, is assassinated on orders of large landowners in Puncas, Brazil.

2004: Rebels take over of the city of Gonaïves, Haiti triggering events leading to fall of Aristide government.

6

Friday

Heb 13.1-8 / Ps 26

Mk 6.14-29

Paul Miki

1694: Zumbi and companions are besieged in Palmares.

Without gunpowder, they fled into the jungle.

1916: Rubén Darío, renowned Nicaraguan man of letters, dies.

1992: Dom Sergio Méndez Arceo, bishop of Cuernavaca, Mexico and Patriarch of Solidarity dies.

7

Saturday

Heb 13.15-17.20-21 / Ps 22

Mk 6.30-34

Richard

1756: Armies of Spain and Portugal massacre 1500 Guarani at Caiboaté, RS, Brazil.

1974: Independence of Granada. National holiday.

1986: Jean Claude Duvalier leaves Haiti after 29 years of family dictatorship.

1990: Raynal Sáenz, priest, is assassinated in Izuchara, Peru.

8

Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Job 7.1-4.6-7 / Ps 146

1Cor 9.16-19.22-23 / Mk 1.29-39

Jerome Emiliani

1712: Slave revolt in New York.

1812: Major repression against the inhabitants of the Quilombos of Rosario, Brasil.

1817: Juan de las Heras leads an army across the Andes to join San Martin and liberate Chile from Spain.

1968: Samuel Hammond, Delano Middleton, and Henry Smith die, and 27 others are wounded when police fire on civil rights protestors in Orangeburg, South Carolina.

9

Monday

Gen 1,1-9 / Ps 103
Mk 6,53-56

Miguel Febres Cordero
Chinese New Year (Yuan Tan).
1977: Agustin Goiburú, Paraguayan doctor, disappeared
in Argentina. See *wikipedia*.
1985: Felipe Balam Tomás, missionary, servant to the poor,
martyred in Guatemala.

10

Tuesday

Scholastica
1763: Treaty of Paris ends the Seven Year War with France
ceding Dominica, Grenada, the Grenadines, Tobago
and Canada to England.
1986: Alberto Koenigsknecht, Peruvian bishop and advocate
for the poor, dies in a suspicious car accident.

Gen 1,20-2,4a / Ps 8
Mk 7,1-13

11

Wednesday

Our Lady of Lourdes
1990: Nelson Mandela freed after 27 years in prison.
1998: The communities of Negras del Medio Atrato (Colombia)
gain collective title to 695,000 Hectares of land.
2006: First woman president of Chile, Michelle Bachelet
inaugurated.

Gen 2,4b-9.15-17 / Ps 103
Mk 7,14-23

World Day of the Sick



12 Thursday

Gen 2,18-25 / Ps 127

Mk 7,24-30

Eulalia

1541: Pedro de Valdivia founds Santiago in Chile.

1542: Orellana reaches the Amazon.

1545: The conquistadores reach the mines of Potosí, where 8 million indigenous people will die.

1809: Abraham Lincoln born in Kentucky, USA.

1894: The Nicaraguan army occupies Bluefields and annexed the Mosquitia territory (Nicaragua).

2005: Dorothy Stang, advocate for the poor and the environment, murdered by land barons at Anapú, Brazil. See her martyrial testimony at: vimeo.com/54570270

Last quarter: 03h50m (UTC) in Scorpio



13 Friday

Gn 3,1-8 / Ps 31

Mk 7,31-37

Benigno

1976: Francisco Soares, priest, martyred in the cause of justice for the poor in Argentina.

1982: James Miller, a LaSalle brother, is martyred for his commitment the indigenous church in Guatemala.

14 Saturday

Gen 3,9-24 / Ps 89

Mk 8,1-10

Valentine, Cyril and Methodius

1992: Rick Julio Medrano, a religious brother, is martyred in service to the persecuted Guatemalan church.

1949: Asbestos workers strike (Québec, Canada).

Friendship Day



February

15

Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Lev 13,1-2,44-46 / Ps 31

1Cor 10,31-11,1 / Mk 1,40-45

Claude

1600: José de Acosta, missionary, historian and defender of indigenous culture, Peru, dies.

1966: Camilo Torres, priest, martyr to the struggles for liberation of the Colombian people.

1981: Juan Alonso Hernández, priest and martyr among the Guatemalan campesinos.

1991: Ariel Granada, Colombian missionary, assassinated by guerrillas in Massangulu, Mozambique.

1992: María Elena Moyano, a social activist, martyred for the cause of justice and peace in Villa El Salvador, Peru.

2003: «First World Demonstration»: 15 million people in 600 cities against the war of the United States against Iraq.

16 Monday

Gen 4,1-15.25 / Ps 49

Juliana y Onésimo

1981: Albino Amarilla, campesino leader and Paraguayan catechist, killed by the army.

1985: Ali Primera, Venezuelan poet and singer for justice to the Latin American people, dies.

1986: Mauricio Demierre, a Swiss international worker and several Nicaraguan campesino women are assassinated by US backed Contras.

Mk 8,11-13

17 Tuesday

Gen 6,5-8;7,1-5.10 / Ps 28

Mk 8,14-21

Servite Founders

1600: Giordano Bruno is burned alive by the Inquisition for his freedom of thinking and expression.

1909: Geronimo or Goyaałé a leader of the Apache resistance to U.S. and Mexican Government incursions on tribal lands dies.

1995: Darcy Ribeiro, an activist writer, anthropologist and Brazilian senator, dies.

1997: 1300 activists of MST (*without land workers movement*) march out of São Paulo for Brasília, for land reform.

18 Wednesday

Ceniza / Joel 2,12-18 / Ps 50

2Cor 5,20-6,2 / Mt 6,1-6.16-18

Simeon

1519: Hernán Cortés leaves Cuba for the conquest of Mexico.

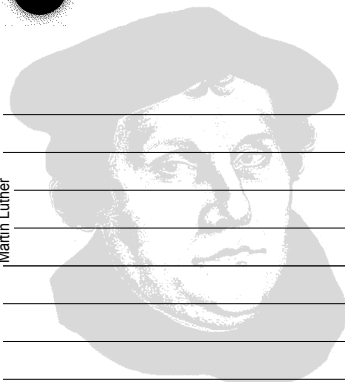
1546: Martin Luther dies in Germany.

1853: Félix Varela, Cuban independence fighter, dies.

1984: Edgar Fernando Garcia, Guatemalan social activist, disappeared.

New Moon: 23h47m (UTC) in Aquarius

Martin Luther



19 Thursday

Deut 30,15-20 / Ps 1

Alvaro and Conrad

1590: Bernadino de Sahugún, missionary and protector of indigenous cultures of Mexico, dies.

1861: Serfdom abolished in Russia.

1990: Students take over traditionally Afro-Mexican Tennessee State University demanding equal economic treatment.

20 Friday

Eleuthere, *Rasmus Jensen*

1524: The Mayan Memorial of Solola records the "destruction of the Quiches by the men of Castile."

1974: Domingo Lain, priest, martyred in the struggle for freedom in Colombia.

1978: Decree 1142 orders Colombia to take into account the language and culture of the indigenous peoples.

World Day for Social Justice (U.N.)

21 Saturday

Isa 58,9b-14 / Ps 85

Peter Damian

1934: Augusto C. Sandino, Nicaraguan patriot, executed by A. Somoza.

1965: Malcolm X, Afro-American leader, is assassinated.

1985: Campesinos are crucified in Xeatzan, during the on-going passion of the Guatemalan people.



February

22

First Sunday of Lent

Gen 9,8-15 / Ps 24

1Pet 3,18-22 / Mk 1,12-15

Chair of Peter

1910: U.S. Marines intervene in Nicaragua.

1943: White Rose members, a German resistance movement, are executed by Nazis.

1979: St. Lucia gains independence. National holiday.

1990: Campesino martyrs in Iquicha, Peru.

23 Monday

Lev 19,1-2,11-18 / Ps 18

Bartholomew and Policarp,
Ziegenbalg
1903: Guantanamo Bay, in Cuba, leased by the United States "in perpetuity."
1936: Elías Beauchamp and Hiram Rosado of the Nationalist Party of Puerto Rico execute Coronel Riggs, for the death of four nationalists.
1970: Guyana attains independence, national holiday.

24 Tuesday

Isa 55,10-11 / Ps 33

Mathew Apostle, Sergio.
1821: The Plan of Iguala proclaims Mexican Independence, national Holiday.
1920: Nancy Astor, first woman elected to parliament, gives her first speech in London.
2008: Fidel Castro retires after forty-nine years as the President of Cuba.
1942: Japanese Internment begins (Canada).

25 Wednesday

Jon 3,1-10 / Ps 50

Justo y Valero, *Isabel Fedde*
National Day for the Dignity of the Victims of the Armed Conflict, Guatemala.
1778: Birthday of José de San Martín.
1980: Military coup in Suriname.
1982: Tucapel Jiménez, Chilean trade union leader, murdered by Pinochet dictatorship.
1985: Guillermo Céspedes, activist and revolutionary, martyr in the struggle of the Columbian people.
1989: Caincoñen, a Toba, assassinated for the defense of indigenous land rights in Formosa, Argentina.
1990: Electoral defeat of the FSLN in Nicaragua.
First quarter: 17h14m (UTC) in Gemini



26 Thursday

Esth 14,1.3-5.12-14 / Ps 137

Paula Montal, Alejandro
 1550: Antonio de Valdivieso, bishop of Nicaragua, martyr in the defense of the indigenous people.
 1885: Berlin Conference divides Africa among European powers.
 1965: Jimmie Lee Jackson, Black civil rights activist, murdered by police in Marion, Alabama.
 1992: José Alberto Llaguno, bishop, incultured apostle of the Tarahumara indigenous people of México, dies.
 2012: Giulio Girardi, Italian and Latin American philosopher and theologian of international solidarity and of the indigenous and revolutionary Cause.

27 Friday

Ezek 18,21-28 / Ps 129

Gabriel de la Dolorosa
 1844: The Dominican Republic declares independence from Haiti. National holiday.
 1989: Free-market reforms spark protests in Caracas, Venezuela, the «Caracazo». Government repression leaves 400 dead.
 1998: Jesús Ma Valle Jaramillo, fourth president of the Commission of Human Rights of Anioquia, Colombia, assassinated.
 2005: 40 out of 57 countries, members of the World Covenant against Tobacco are legally bound.
 2010: Earthquake in Chile, 8.8 on the Richter scale, leaves 500 dead.

28 Saturday

Deut 26,16-19 / Ps 118

Román
 1924: The US Marines occupy Tegucigalpa.
 1985: Guillermo Céspedes Siabato, a lay person committed to Christian to Socialism and to the Base Ecclesial Communities, worker, teacher, poet, assassinated by the army, Colombia.
 1989: Teresita Ramirez, a sister of the Companions of Mary, is assassinated in Cristales, Colombia.
 1989: Miguel Angel Benitez, priest, killed in Colombia.

1

Second Sunday of Lent
 Gen 22,1-2.9-13.15-18 / Ps 115
 Rom 8,31b-34 / Mk 9,2-10

Rosendo, Albino, *George Herbert*
 1739: British sign a treaty with Jamaican runaway slaves known as Maroons.
 1954: Lolita Lebron, Rafael Cancel Miranda, Irving Flores and Andrés Figueroa attacked the U. S. House of Representatives demanding Puerto Rican independence.
 2002: U.S.-led invasion of Afghanistan begins.
 1959: Founding of the CLAR, Latin-American Confederation of Religious.
 2012: Milton Schwantes, Brazilian, Lutheran bible expert, promoter of the Latin American popular biblical reading.

RIGHTS OF THE EARTH, HUMAN DUTIES

AFONSO MURAD

Belo Horizonte, MG, Brasil

Awareness of the 'Rights of the Earth' is still developing.

Intuitively, it is present already among various indigenous peoples of our continent. For them, the ground on which we stand is a sacred place. Mother Earth cares for and feeds all children: plants, animals and humans. It offers us as gift-the mountains, valleys, air, water and soil.

For African-American cultures, the sacred soil should be revered, since from it we received a key benefit (Axé). The earth is celebrated and praised joyfully in ritual dance. A community and maternal space, it is also the place of encounter with the gods.

These people do not have a legal notion of the Rights of the Earth. As the human being is a child and part of the Earth, s/he must respect it. Such a notion, much of the time considered as something prescientific, mythic and primitive today is being recovered, because it contains an ancient wisdom. In Christian tradition Francis of Assisi stands out because he considered all beings as our brothers.

In the West, the great point of environmental awareness appeared with the 'Club of Rome', in 1968. In the middle of a time of 'progress' and 'development' euphoria in Europe and the United States, this group of scientists and opinion leaders suggested that the Earth was reaching its functional limits. It was necessary to change course! The ecological movement emerged in outrage over the environmental pollution and (re) enchantment with exposure to nature. This expanded with 'deep ecology' and the critiques of Lester Brown, Fritjof Capra and other thinkers, showing that the roots of the ecological crisis is simultaneously encountered in a model of understanding (paradigm) and the capitalist market.

Since the 16th century the West developed an exclusively anthropocentric posture. Human were considered the center of the universe. Abiotic beings (air, soil, water, solar energy) as 'natural resources',

could be exploited limitlessly. The same could be said of the living, or biotic beings (micro-organisms, plants and animals). The natural environment should be dominated, examined, manipulated, since it was composed of "things."

The capitalist economy, in turn, sees the supply chain as linear: extraction, transportation, industrial production, distribution, sale, consumption, disposal. It ignored that at each stage waste is generated and energy consumed. In nature, on the contrary, everything happens in cycles of matter and energy in constant interaction. What would be the waste to some beings is for others food or an energy source. But the market economy devours more and more energy and fine matter each time, and produces more waste in the soil, water and air. The life cycles of the planet are thus compromised.

A paradigm shift is necessary. For some, anthropocentrism should be abandoned in favor of biocentrism, because all beings have equal value in the web of life. For others, the current view should be broaden, keeping the human being at the center, but now in relation to the ecosystem. And some argue that it is a mistake to continue thinking of a center, it would be better to think about the relationships that weave endless networks of matter, energy and information. Instead of looking for a center, try to reinforce interdependence, the multiple relationships that tie all beings (including humans) into the web of life.

The fight for the rights of the Earth

Could the Earth, as a whole, have rights? And the various creatures who inhabit it, too? In this case, who would reclaim them? These and other questions raise passionate discussions. It seems that the environment would not be a "subject of rights", since it has no conscience, no freedom, no creative language, like humans. Moreover, in the web of life, humans would be more important than other animals. And

Translation by Michael Dougherty

the suspicion always arises that the struggle for the rights of the Earth could divert the focus from the urgent question and essential rights of the poor and of oppressed peoples.

Moreover, humanity is part of the Earth, as it is the Earth itself, which feels and thinks reflexively. More than that other beings have some otherness. They are not just “things”, but “others.” They deserve respect. The cry of the Earth does not appear as human, but it is also a cry. The Earth is our common home. It is essential to defend it in order to ensure the continuity of all life. For example: the struggle for the human right to satisfy hunger depends on, among other things, fertile soil, favorable weather conditions, seeds available to farmers, water, pest control ... It involves at least the rights of soil, water and biodiversity.

The Earth, as a diverse and complex unit, has rights which must be guaranteed by we humans. The fundamental right is to ensure the continuity of life in its entirety, maintaining the equilibrium of the environment and biodiversity. There are also specific struggles for the defense of some elements of the eco-system, for example, the battle for ‘animal rights’. So laws that punish the abuse of domestic animals were established, procedures are created relating to the animals confined for consumption or production, hunting of wild animals is limited, the spawning cycle of fish is respected ... Measures are taken to prevent the extinction of endangered species. A growing number of people opt for the vegetarian diet, reducing meat consumption.

In many places growing mobilization in defense of biomes, particularly those threatened by oil exploitation, mining, soybean and eucalyptus monoculture, the intensive planting system of “agribusiness” (with chemical fertilizers and poisons), apart from property speculation and the chaotic spread of urbanization. On our continent, the struggle of the peoples of the pan-Amazonia, the preservation of coastal areas, savannahs (as the Brazilian ‘hills’), the Andean plateau, the Patagonian can be highlighted... There are also networks that form to articulate a defense of water quality, mobilizing to preserve water sources, to establish public policies that ensure the potability of water from rivers and lakes, the treat-

ment of waste water, reducing pollution emission. Not to mention the improvement of air quality and the adoption of renewable energy generation with less impact on the environment.

The fight for the “rights of the Earth” comprises as much planetary issues as concrete mobilizations relating to the care of the soil, air, water, plants and animals. This includes complex themes such as energy policy and global governability. One thing is certain: in nature, everything is interlinked. It is impossible to understand one element without taking account of the others. Any movement for the benefit of one, brings benefits to all. This goes for us also, the humans.

The struggle for human rights, and especially for the Rights of the Poor, expands with the socio-environmental commitment. As the preamble to the Earth Charter (1987) proclaims: “we are one human family and one Earth community with a common destiny. We must join together to bring forth a sustainable global society founded on respect for nature, universal human rights, economic justice, and a culture of peace. Towards this end, it is imperative that we, the peoples of Earth, declare our responsibility to one another, to the greater community of life, and to future generations”

Religions, Earth Rights and Human Rights

During Rio’s Peoples Summit +20 in June 2012, various religious leaders came together to discuss the relationship between religion and environmental issues. In their *Letter from the Religions over the care of the Earth*, they affirmed:

“Religion, society and environment are closely correlated realities. Religious traditions contribute to the expansion of the consciousness of their followers over the fundamental values of life, personal, social and environmental, orienting by respectful coexistence between peoples, cultures and beliefs, and from those with all creation “.

The representatives of the religions present pledged to develop a new ethic in relation to the environment, able to guide new defensive attitudes towards all forms of life, sustained by public policy of environmental justice in a mysticism / spirituality that expounds thanks and the gift of life.

2015

February

M T W T F S S
1
2 3 4 5 6 7 8
9 10 11 12 13 14 15

M T W T F S S
16 17 18 19 20 21 22
23 24 25 26 27 28

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday
23 Lunes	24 Martes	25 Miercoles	26 Jueves
2	3	4	5
9	10	11	12
16	17	18	19
23	24	25	26
30	31		

April

MARCH

2

Monday

Dan 9,4b-10 / Ps 78

Simplicio

John and Charles Wesley

1836: Republic of Texas declares independence from Mexico.

1791: John Wesley dies in England.

1897: Third attack against Canudos, Brazil.

1901: US Platt Amendment limited autonomy of Cuba as a condition for eventual removal of occupying troops.

1963: Goulart proclaims the Workers' Statute, a step forward at the time, Brazil.

Lk 6,36-38

3

Tuesday

Isa 1,10.16-20 / Ps 49

Emeterio, Celedonio, Marino

1908: Birth of Juan Antonio Corretjer, Puerto Rican poet, founder of the Socialist League.

1982: Hipolite Cervantes Arceo, Mexican priest martyred for his solidarity with Guatemalan exiles.

1982: Emiliano Pérez Obando, judge and delegate of the word, martyr of the Nicaraguan revolution.

2000: The dictator Pinochet returns to Chile after 503 days of detention in London.

2005: The WTO condemns the U.S. cotton subsidies that harm free trade.

Mt 23,1-12

4

Wednesday

Jer 18,18-20 / Ps 30

Casimir

Mt 20,17-28

1962: The United States begins to operate a nuclear reactor in Antarctica.

1970: Antonio Martinez Lagares is assassinated by police in Puerto Rico.

1990: Nahamán Carmona, a street child, is beaten to death by the police in Guatemala.

2004: The Argentinean navy acknowledges for the first time that it carried out torture during the dictatorship.

1941: All Japanese Canadians registered by the government.



5 Thursday

Jer 17,5-10 / Ps 1

Adrian

Lk 16,19-31

1766: Spanish governor assumes control over former the French territory of Louisiana.

1940: Soviet authorities ordered execution of more than 25,000 Polish POW's and elites in Katyn forest.

1996: 3,000 families effect the Landless Movement's largest occupation, Curionópolis, Brazil.

2013: Dies Hugo Chávez, Venezuela's President.



Full Moon: 18h05m (UTC) in Virgo

6 Friday

Gen 37,3-28 / Ps 104

Olegario, Rosa de Viterbo

Mt 21,33-43,45-46

1817: The revolution at Pernambuco, Brazil.

1836 Mexican forces defeat pro-slavery secessionist force at the Battle of the Alamo.

1854: Slavery is abolished in Ecuador.

1996: Pascuala Rosado Cornejo, founder of the self-directed community of Huayacán, Peru, assassinated for standing up to terrorists.

2005: The Argentinean Supreme Court confirms the life sentence of Arancibia Clavel for his assassination of Chilean General Prats in 1974 as a crime against humanity.

7 Saturday

Mic 7,14-15,18-20 / Ps 102

Perpetua and Felicity; Thomas Aquinas

Lk 15,1-3,11-32

1524: Cakchiquel kings, Ahpop and Ahpop Qamahay were burned to death by Pedro de Alvarado during the Spanish conquest of Guatemala.

1994: Diocesan priest Joaquin Carregal, prophet of justice dies in Quilmes, Argentina

2009: Fujimori is sentenced to 25 years in prison.

March

8

John of God

Third Sunday of Lent

Ex 20,1-17 / Ps 18

1Cor 1,22-25 / Jn 2,13-25

1782: Nearly 100 Munsee wrongly suspected of collaborating with British in Revolutionary War executed by Pennsylvanian militiamen at Gnadenhutzen, Ohio.

International Women's Day

Established in 1910 in memory of New York workers who died on March 8, 1857 while demanding better working conditions and the right to vote.



9

Monday

2Kings 5,1-15a / Ps 41
Lk 4,24-30

Dominic Savio
Francisca Romana

1841: U. S. Supreme Court rules on the Amistad case that Africans who had seized control of their slave ship had been taken into slavery illegally.

1965: Rev. James J. Reeb, Unitarian minister and civil rights activist, martyred in Selma, Alabama.

1989: 500 families occupy a hacienda and are forced out by military police leaving 400 wounded and 22 detained, Salto do Jacuí, RS, Brazil.

1989: Massacre de Santa Elmira. 500 familias ocupan una hacienda y son expulsadas por la policía militar: 400 heridos, 22 presos. Salto do Jacuí, RD, Brasil.

10

Tuesday

Dan 3,25.34-43 / Ps 24
Mt 18,21-35

Macario

1928: Elias del Socorro Nieves, Agustinian, Jesus and Dolores Sierra assassinated for proclaiming their faith in Mexico.

1945: Firebombing of Tokyo results in deaths of more than 100,000 people, mostly civilians.

Bottled Water Free Day (Canada)

11

Wednesday

Deut 4,1.5-9 / Ps 147
Mt 5,17-19

Constantino, Vicente, Ramiro

1797: Defeated by the English, the Garifunas of Saint Vincent are deported to Honduras.

1914: Opening of the Panama Canal.

1966: Henry Marrow violently dies in a racially-motivated crime in Oxford, North Carolina.

1990: The dictatorship of Pinochet takes a step toward "State-approved" democracy. Patricio Aylwin becomes president.

2004: Terrorist attack in Madrid leaves 200 dead and 1400 injured.



12 Thursday

Jer 7,23-28 / Ps 94

Inocencio, Gregorio
1930: Gandhi leads Salt March in nonviolent defiance of British colonial rule.
1977: Rutilio Grande, parish priest, and Manuel and Nelson, peasants, martyred by the military in El Salvador.
1994: The Anglican Church ordains a first group of 32 women priests in Bristol.
2005: Argentina extradites Paul Schaefer to Chile, ex-Nazi collaborator with Pinochet in the "Colonia Dignidad," accused of disappearances, torture and sexual abuse of minors.

13 Friday

Hos 14,2-10 / Ps 80

Rodrigo, Salomón, Eulogio
1957: José Antonio Echeverría, student and Catholic Action activist, dies in the struggle to free Cuba from Batista dictatorship.
1979: Coup d'état brings the New Jewel Movement to power in Grenada.
1983: Marianela García, lawyer to the poor, founder of the Human Rights Coalition, martyr to justice in El Salvador.
1998: Maria Leide Amorim, campesina leader of the landless, assassinated in Manaus in revenge for having led an occupation by the Landless Peoples' Movement.
Last quarter: 17h48m (UTC) in Sagittarius



14 Saturday

Hos 6,1-6 / Ps 50

Matilde
1549: Black Franciscan, Antony of Cathegeró, dies.
1795: Garifunas leader Joseph Satuyé killed by British colonizers.
1849: Moravian missionaries arrived in Bluefieds (Nicaragua) to evangelize the Mosquitia.
1997: Declaration of Curitiba: International Day of Action Against Dams and in favor of water and life.
2009: Evo Morales begins to distribute landholdings to Indigenous peoples under provisions of the new Constitution.
1967: Chinese Immigration Act of 1923 repealed (Canada).

March

15

Fourth Sunday of Lent

2Chr 36,14-16.19-23 / Ps 136

Eph 2,4-10 / Jn 3,14-21

Louise de Marillac

1961: The Alliance for Progress is created.
1986: Pastor Antonio Chaj Solis, Manuel de Jesús Recinos and evangelical companions are martyred for their dedication to the poor.
1995: General Luis García Meza is sentenced to 30 years in prison for crimes committed following the 1980 military coup in Bolivia. This is the first case of the imprisonment of Latin American military involved in coups.

16 Monday

Isa 65,17-21 / Ps 29

Raimundo de Fitero

Jn 4,43-54

Patrick

1630 Benkos Biohó, heroic anti-slavery leader, dies in Colombia.

1977: Antonio Olivo and Pantaleón Romero are martyred for their commitment to the land struggle in Argentina.

17 Tuesday

Ezek 47,1-9.12 / Ps 45

Jn 5,1-3.5-16

1973: Alexandre Vanucchi, student and Christian activist, assassinated by Brazilian police.

1982: Jacobus Andreas Koster "Kooos" and fellow journalists committed to the truth, are assassinated in El Salvador.

1990: María Mejía, Quiche campesino mother involved in Catholic Action is assassinated in Sacapulas, Guatemala.

18 Wednesday

Isa 49,8-15 / Ps 144

Jn 5,17-30

Cyril of Jerusalem

1907: U.S. Marines land in Honduras.

1938: Mexican president Lázaro Cárdenas decrees the nationalization of oil.

1981: Presentación Ponce, Delegate of the Word, martyred along with companions in Nicaragua.

1989: Neftali Liceta, priest, martyred along with Amparo Escobedo and companions among the poor in Peru.



19 Thursday

2Sam 7,4-5a.12-14a.16 / Ps 88
Joseph Rom 4,13.16-18.22 / Mt 1,16.18-21.24a
1849: The Quemado Revolution, Brazil. More than 200 Blacks proclaim the Liberation of slaves.
1915: Uprising of the Quechuas and the Aymaras in Peru; led by Rumi Maka.
1980: First Afro-American Ministry Meeting, in Buenaventura, Colombia.
1982: Argentina's military landing on South Georgia Island triggers Falklands War with Great Britain.
1991: Felisa Urrutia, a Carmelite nun working with the poor, assassinated in Cauca, Venezuela.

20 Friday

Serapión Wis 2,1a.12-22 / Ps 33
Jn 7,1-2.10.25-30
1838: The government of Sergipe (Brazil) prohibits the "Africans" and those suffering contagious diseases from attending school.
1982: Rios Montt leads a State coup, Guatemala.
1995: Menche Ruiz, catechist, popular poet, missionary to base Christian communities in El Salvador, dies.
2003: U.S. lead invasion of Iraq begins without U.N. mandate.

**Equinox, the spring / autumn at 23h45m UTC
Total eclipse in solar the North Atlantic**

New Moon: 09h36m (UTC) in Pisces



21 Saturday

Jer 11,18-20 / Ps 7
Jn 7,40-53
Filemon and Nicholas
Baha'i New Year
World Forest Day
1806: Benito Juárez, born in Oaxaca, México.
1937: Ponce massacre, Puerto Rico.
1975: Carlos Dormiak, Salesian priest, assassinated for his commitment to Liberation, Argentina.
1977: Rodolfo Aquilar, a 29 year old parish priest, martyred in Mexico.
1987: Luz Marina Valencia, nun, martyr for justice among the campesinos of Mexico.

Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination

March

22

Bienvenido, Lea

Fifth Sunday of Lent
Jer 31,31-34 / Ps 50
Heb 5,7-9 / Jn 12,20-33
1873: Spanish National Assembly passes law abolishing slavery in Puerto Rico.
1980: Luis Espinal, priest and journalist, martyred in the struggles of the Bolivian people.
1988: Rafael Hernández, campesino, martyr in the struggle for land, Mexico.

23 Monday

Dan 13,1-9.15-17.19-30.33-62 / Ps 22
 Toribio de Mogrovejo Jn 8,1-11
 1606: Toribio de Mogrovejo, Archbishop of Lima, pastor to the Inca people, prophet in the colonial Church, dies.
 1976: Maria del Carmen Maggi, Argentine professor and martyr for liberating education, martyred.
 2003: Rachel Corrie, human rights volunteer, killed by Israeli bulldozer while protesting the demolition of Palestinian homes.
 2005: Chile admits to the assassination by the dictatorship of Carmelo Soria in 1976.

24 Tuesday

José Oriol Num 21,4-9 / Ps 101
 Jn 8,21-30
 1918: Canadian women gain the vote.
 1976: Argentine 'Dirty War' which killed 4,000 and disappeared 30,000, begins with a military coup.
 1980: Oscar Arnulfo Romero, Archbishop of San Salvador, "Saint Romero of the Americas" is assassinated.
 2004: Kirchner converts the torture centre from the dictatorship into the Museum to the Memory of Terrorism of the Argentinean State: 4,000 assassinated and 30,000 disappeared.

Visit today the Romero page and his homilies:
<http://servicioskoinonia.org/romero>

**International Day for the Right to Know the Truth
 About Violations of Human Rights and the Dignity of
 Victims** (designated in 2010 by the UN for the 17th of June)

25 Wednesday

Isa 7,10-14;8,10 / Ps 39
 Heb 10,4-10 / Lk 1,26-38
 Annunciation
 1807: Enactment of Slave Trade Act abolishes slavery in Great Britain and Ireland.
 1986: Donato Mendoza, Delegate of the Word, and companions murdered for their faithful work among Nicaragua's poor.

Monsignor Romero



26 Thursday

Gen 17,3-9 / Ps 104
Jn 8,51-59

Braulio

1989: Maria Gómez, teacher and catechist, killed for her service to the Simiti people in Colombia.

1991: Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay sign the Treaty of Commence of Asunción, thus creating the Mercosur.

1998: Onalcio Araujo Barrios and Valentin Serra, leaders of the landless movement, executed by large landowners in Parauapebas, Pará, Brazil.

27 Friday

Jer 20,10-13 / Ps 17
Jn 10,31-42

Ruperto

1502: Columbus lands at Carani, Costa Rica.

1814: Forces under General Andrew Jackson defeat Creek under Red Stick at Battle of Horseshoe Bend in final push to "clear" Alabama of its original peoples.

1984: The Txukahamãe block a main highway demanding their lands in Xingú, Brasil.

2011: Jose Comblin, theologian of liberation, missionary, prophet, and prolific writer, committed to the poorest communities, dies. Brazil.

First quarter: 07h42m (UTC) in Cancer



28 Saturday

Ezek 37,21-28 / Jer 31
Jn 11,45-57

Sixtus

1750: Francisco de Miranda, Spanish-American revolutionary is born in Caracas, Venezuela.

1985: Héctor Gómez Calito, defender of human rights, captured, tortured and brutally assassinated in Guatemala.

1988: 14 indigenous Tikunas are assassinated and 23 wounded by the forestry industrialist Oscar Castelo Branco and 20 gunmen. Meeting in Benjamin Constant, Brasil, they were waiting for the help of FUNAI.

1972: Quebec General Strike.

29

Palm Sunday
Isa 50,4-7 / Ps 21
Fhil 2,6-11 / Mk 14,1-15,47

Beatriz de Silva, Juan Nielsen Hauge

1857: Sepoy Mutiny or War of Independence breaks out against British colonial rule in India.

1904: Birth of Consuelo Lee Corretjer, revolutionary, poet and teacher, leader of the Puerto Rican Independence movement.

1967: Oil is brought to the surface for the first time in the Ecuadorian Amazon.

1985: Brothers Rafael and Eduardo Vergara Toledo, militant Christians, martyred in resistance to the dictatorship in Chile.

THE RIGHTS OF THE AMAZON REGION

SANDRO GALLAZZI

Macapá, AP, Brazil

"We are the Amazon Region", shouted the people of the Ishas de Afuá, during the EC092. This cry, better than a protest, was a statement that one could not speak of the Amazon Region without considering first and foremost its historical inhabitants, in all their diversity. They were experiencing being an "obstacle", on the one hand, to expansion of capital, nurtured by governments and, on the other, to conservationist projects, born in rich countries worried just by the preservation of the environment.

Fifteen years later, in 2007, the Campaign for Fraternity in the Amazon Region recorded the permanent growth of this conflict: the conservationist claimed the deployment of more Conservation Units. Great landowners and companies, many of them foreign, fought for the enlargement of the mercantilist utilisation of land: wood and mining, then cattle and immediately soy, sugar cane and other monocultures. The traditional peoples, indigenous, "ribeños", "seringueiros", "poseiros", African descendants... fought to defend their rights to legally own a territory.

In the Brazilian Amazon the conservation units occupied then a territory of more than 86 million hectares (17%). The legally or illegally occupied territory by capital was more than 227 million hectares (45%). The area defended and occupied by traditional populations summed up just a little more than 150 million hectares (30%). In the last six years conservation units and companies enlarged their territories at the expense of that belonging to the traditional populations.

The adage over and over repeated claims that "there is much land for a few indigenous", but few people state "there is much land for a few big landowners". It seems to be that the "land for traditional populations" is synonymous with backlog and despicable subsistence agriculture. The land of great landowners and companies, on the other hand, means growth, progress and developed market agriculture.

Moreover, this is one of the major arguments

which, since the military governments of the 70's, justify the opening of the Amazon Region to mercantilist capital: Latin America needs to grow, it is not possible to let an immense area as the Amazon Region live in backwardness.

Uncountable conflicts, provoked by capital actors, with the collusion of governments, provoked the eviction of the indigenous, ribeños, poseiros and Afro-descendants. An era of concentration, devastation and violence "against the poor and homeless" started (Is 5,8; Mq 2,2).

This was the first cry from the lands of the Amazon Region. The excruciating cry of hundreds of people murdered; the inconsolable wail of their families; the cry of rage and impotence of millions of families who saw their houses burnt, their orchards destroyed; the discouraged groan of those forced to live, unemployed, in the suburbs of cities, in inhuman conditions.

The cause of all this violence lies mostly in the way land, water, nature, are regarded. We cannot regard the Amazon Region as raw material that only becomes valuable when it is turned into a merchandise –even as carbon credits– and as such must be commercialised and privatised. We need to regard land, water, nature and, hence, all the Amazon Region, with the eyes of those who have been living in it for centuries without ravaging it, destroying it: it is our home, our mother, our lover and source of life for all creatures.

The culture and philosophy of the market, with contempt and condescension, have too quickly called "animism" to the way the Afro-Amerindian populations relate with nature, who know they are part of a unique life. In this way, the Amazon Region cannot be considered as "something" that is good just as a guarantee to our rights. It has rights of its own. The primordial right of the Amazon Region is to live a fulfilling life.

When talking of the rights of the Amazon Region then, we need to consider the rights of those who

Translation by Alice Méndez

have made the region their home, those who live in it and share life with it in harmony and interactively. The safest way to guarantee the rights of the Amazon Region to a fulfilling life is to guarantee the inalienable rights of the peoples and communities that live in the Amazon Region. If this chain is broken life is jeopardised.

To learn from traditional communities the meaning of a house turned into a “common tent”, open to everyone, does not mean backwardness. It means abundant life to everyone.

It is necessary to revise our way of thinking about this our common home. Ecology is to say what we think of our home, as a whole. Almost always –and here businessmen and environmentalists are the same– ecology is understood as our relation with nature, with our backyard. The environment, the way the backyard should function, is discussed... but the type of home we want is not discussed.

Many people when thinking of home still think in the *casa grande* (big house, where the owner lives) and in the *senzala* (where slaves barely survive). They do not think in a common home, where all sit around a table and share the same bread, without distinctions...

Many talk of ecology, but only worry about nature, as an environment outside the house. They talk of sustainable development, in defence of land and water, but still have their minds in the big house of the rich countries, of the dominant classes, of the privileged and corrupted elites. Progress, growth, development, for them, means entering into the big house.

The *senzala* has not left the mind of many of us. We need to convert, because the economy –the “norms of the house”– will depend on ecology: which home are we talking about, what type of home we want to live in. Let us not forget that the word pharaoh means, literally, big house...

We need to nurture an adult and solid mystique that will help us not only defeat the pharaoh who oppresses us, but also defeat the little pharaoh we have inside us and inside our organisations, and against which there is no vaccine.

If we continue to believe in the big house, we will have an economy centred in agri-business, in monoculture, in mining, raw materials exports, slave work, large estates, transgenic seeds, agrochemicals and violence. In the best of hypothesis, studies of envi-

ronment impact will be made to try to minimise and compensate for the inevitable devastation. The big house will stay with products and profits; the *senzala* will be left with work and crumbs of social assistance. The land will be devastated. The poor will lose the land! The land will lose its life!

To fight for land and for the life of the Earth is an ethical must that testifies fidelity to our memories, our tradition, our ancestors, our roots. It is fidelity to the poor of God.

To fight for land and for the life of the Earth is a must that testifies our sacred relationship with earth, our mother, our lover, to whom we owe “service and obedience” (Gn 2,15), because in it and from it all other generations will have life in abundance. This is fidelity to the EARTH which belongs to God and to everyone.

To fight for land and for the life of the Earth is an obligation that testifies our faith in God. Theology depends also from ecology. The house we desire indicates the God to whom our house must be faithful. It is fidelity to the God of the poor.

This testimony of fidelity to the God of the poor, to the poor of God, and to the earth which belongs to God and everyone, took many of our mates to love unto death: martyrs we never forget.

Our churches, many times, have followed and follow the logic of the big house that deteriorated our relationships, tying them to a blasphemous and diabolical sacred-business, the same which, allied to an oppressive empire, condemned Jesus of Nazareth to death.

We need to change, within and outside the Church: in his last supper Jesus made it clear that service, home, table and bread shared must substitute domination, temples, altars and sacrifices.

Bread shared means land shared, goods shared, fight against all concentration, against excluding, devastating and violent great estates. Believe that our house is a cottage, a common “tent”. Our God, the gods of our ancestors, will never be in the big house, despite the enormous temples built and which continue to be built.

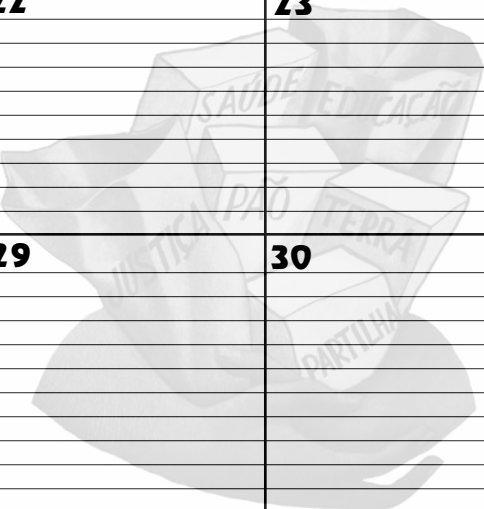
Yaveh will always be the God of the poor, who just want to live in peace, being able to enjoy the fruits of the land and their work, the bread and wine we offer the Lord so they always belong to everyone.

2015

March

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9	10	11	12	13	14	15	30	31					

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday
30 Lunes	31 Martes	1 Miercoles	2 Jueves
6	7	8	9
13	14	15	16
20	21	22	23
27	28	29	30



<div> <div>Friday</div> <div>Saturday</div> <div>Sunday</div> </div>			APRIL	
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30 Monday

Isa 42,1-7 / Ps 26

Gladys, Juan Clímaco

Jn 12,1-11

Benjamín,

1492: The Edict of Expulsion of the Jews issued by Ferdinand and Isabella of Spain.

1870: Afro-American men win the vote in the United States: ratification of the 15th amendment.

1985: José Manuel Parada, sociologist, Santiago Natino, art student and Mauel Guerrero, labour leader are assassinated in Santiago, Chile.

31 Tuesday

Isa 49,1-6 / Ps 70

Jn 13,21-33.36-38 Hugh

Amos, John Dunne

1767: Expulsion of the Jesuits from Latin America.

1866: Chile, Bolivia and Peru take arms against Spanish aggression.

1987: Roseli Correa da Silva, campesina, run down by a landowner's truck in Natalino, Brazil.

1 Wednesday

Isa 50,4-9 / Ps 68

Mt 26,14-25

1680: Lisbon abolishes the slavery of Indigenous peoples in Brazil, influenced by Antonio Vieira.

1923: The first feminist congress is celebrated in Latin America, in Cuba.

1964: Military coup against João Goulart. Thus begins 21 years of military dictatorship in Brazil.

1980: The great strike of metalworkers in São Paulo and the interior begins.

1982: Ernesto Pili Parra is martyred in the cause of peace and justice in Colombia.

1999: Nunavut, a new Canadian territory is formed to protect Inuit culture.



2 Thursday

Holy Thursday
Francis of Paola
1550: The Spanish Crown orders Spanish to be taught to the Indigenous peoples.
1982: The Argentinean army occupies the Malvinas (Falkland) Islands in an attempt to regain control of the archipelago from the British who occupied it in 1833.
1993: 8 European countries undertake a joint strike against unemployment and the threat to social victories.
2005: Pope John Paul II dies.

3 Friday

Good Friday
Ricardo, Sixto
1948: U.S. President Truman signs the Marshall Plan for the post-war reconstruction of Europe.
1976: Victor Boichenko, Protestant pastor, disappeared in Argentina.
1986: Brazil approved its Plan for Information Technology. It will protect the national industry for several years.
1992: Institutional State coup by Fujimori, Peru.

4 Saturday

Holy Saturday
Gema Galgani, Isidore of Seville
1775: The Portuguese crown encourages marriages between Indigenous people, Blacks and Whites.
1884: The Valparaiso Agreement. Bolivia cedes Antofagasta to Chile thus turning itself into a land-locked country.
1968: Martin Luther King Jr. is assassinated in Memphis, Tennessee.
1985: Maria Rosario Godoy, leader of the Mutual Support Group (GAM) in Guatemala, is tortured and murdered along with her 2 year old son.

Day of Protest against Child Prostitution

Total lunar eclipse, visible in America



Full Moon: 12h05m (UTC) in Libra

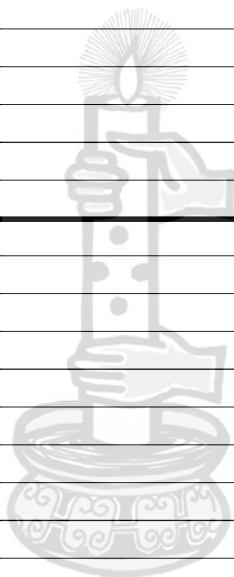
5

Vincent Ferrer

1989: Maria Cristina Gómez, a Baptist and women's rights activist, is martyred in El Salvador.
1992: Fujimori dissolves congress, suspends the constitution and imposes martial law.

EASTER Sunday

Acts 10,34a.37-43 / Ps 117
Col 3,1-4 / Jn 20,1-9



6

Monday

Atcs 2,14,22-23 / Ps 15

Mt 28,8-15

Marcelino

Alberto Durero

1979: Hugo Echegaray, 39 year-old priest and liberation theologian dedicated to the poor in Peru, dies.

1994: Rwandan genocide begins.

7

Tuesday

Acts 2,36-41 / Ps 32

Jn 20,11-18

Juan Bta. de La Salle

1868: Thomas D'Arcy McGee, one of the Canadian Fathers of Confederation is assassinated.

World Health Day

8

Wednesday

Acts 3,1-10 / Ps 104

Lk 24,13-35

Dionisio

Feast of «Vesakh», Birth of Buddha (566 B.C.E.).

1513: Juan Ponce de León claims Florida for Spain.

1827: Birth of Ramón Emeterio Betances, a revolutionary who developed the idea of the Cry of Lares, a Puerto Rican insurrection against Spanish rule.

1977: Carlos Bustos, an Argentinean priest, is assassinated for his support of the poor in Buenos Aires.

World Romani (Gypsy) Day

Established by the First World Romani Congress celebrated in London on this day in 1971

April



9 Thursday

Acts 3,11-26 / Ps 8
Lk 24,35-48

Casilda, M^a Cleofás
Dietrich Bonhoeffer

1920: The US Marines land in Guatemala to protect U.S. citizens.

1948: Jorge Eliécer Gaitán is assassinated in Bogotá, Colombia, sparking the bloody repression of the 'Bogotazo'.

1952: The Bolivian National Revolution begins a period of fundamental political and economic reform.

1945: Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Pastor in the Lutheran Confessing Church opposed to Hitler, is executed today.

10 Friday

Acts 4,1-12 / Ps 117
Jn 21,1-14

Ezechiel

Miguel Agrícola

1919: Emiliano Zapata, peasant warrior hero of the Mexican Revolution, dies in a military ambush.

1955: Pierre Teilhard de Chardin dies in New York. **60 years.**

1985: Daniel Hubert Guillard, parish priest, murdered by the army in Cali, Colombia

1987: Martiniano Martínez, Terencio Vázquez and Abdón Julián, of the Baptist Church, martyrs to freedom of conscience in Oaxaca, Mexico.

11 Saturday

Acts 4,13-21 / Ps 117
Mk 16,9-15

Estanislao

1945: U.S. forces liberate the Buchenwald concentration camp from the Nazis.

1986: Antonio Hernández, journalist and popular activist, martyred in Bogotá, Colombia.

2002: State coup against President Hugo Chávez in Venezuela lasts four days until he is returned to office. Three presidents in 42 hours.

12

Second Sunday of Easter
Acts 4,32-35 / Ps 117
1Jn 5,1-6 / Jn 20,19-31

Zenón

1797: 25,000 Carib people expelled by the British from the island of St. Vincent arrive in Trujillo, Honduras. They became known as the Garífuna people.

1861: The American Civil War begins with Confederate forces bombarding Fort Sumter, in Charleston, South Carolina.

1925: Gathering in Foz de Iguaçu initiates the Prestes Column that will travel 25,000 kilometers in Brazil.

1997: Teresa Rodríguez is assassinated, in a teacher demonstration in Neuquen, Argentina. The major Argentinian picketing movement takes her name, MTR.

13 Monday

Acts 4,23-31 / Ps 2

Martín, Hermenegildo

1873: White supremacists murder 105 black and 3 white men in Colfax, Louisiana.

1919: British and Gurkha troops massacre 379 unarmed demonstrators in Amritsar, India.

1999: The trial of 155 police is transferred to Belem. They are accused of the murder of 19 landless people in Eldorado do Carajás, Brazil.

14 Tuesday

Telmo

1981: In Morazán, El Salvador, 150 children, 600 elderly people and 700 women die at the hands of the military in the largest massacre recorded in recent Salvadoran history.

1985: Sister Adelaide Molinari is martyred in the struggle of the marginalized, Marabá, Brazil.

2010: Reynaldo Bignone is condemned to 25 years in prison for crimes against humanity during the dictatorship in Argentina.

Acts 4,32-37 / Ps 92

Jn 3,5a.7b-15

15 Wednesday

Acts 5,17-26 / Ps 33

Jn 3,16-21

Benedict Joseph Labré

1961: The Bay of Pigs Invasion, Cuba.

1983: Indigenous campesino martyrs of Joyabaj, El Quiché, Guatemala.

1989: Madeleine Lagadec, a French nurse, is tortured and killed along with Salvadorans María Cristina Hernández, nurse, Celia Díaz, teacher. Carlos Gómez and Gustavo Isla Casares an Argentinean doctor were injured.

1992: Aldemar Rodríguez, catechist and his companions are martyred in the cause of youth solidarity in Cali, Colombia.

1993: José Barbero, priest, prophet and servant to the poorest brothers of Bolivia.

April

16 Thursday

Acts 5,27-33 / Ps 33

Jn 3,31-36 Aniceto

Engracia

- 1919: Mohatmas Gandhi calls for a non-violent protest of "prayer and fasting" in response to the Amritsar Massacre.
- 1952: The revolution triumphs: campesinos and miners achieve land reform in Bolivia.
- 1977: The Committee for the Defense of Political Prisoners, the Persecuted, the Disappeared and Exiles of Mexico (EUREKA) is established.
- 2002: Carlos Escobar, Paraguayan Judge, orders the capture and extradition of dictator Alfredo Stroessner, who had taken refuge in Brasilia. He is accused of the death in 1979 of a leader of the teachers union.
- 2007: 32 die in the Virginia Tech massacre, the worst rampage in modern American history.

World Day Against Child Slavery

215 million children in this situation, according to OIT in 2010.

17 Friday

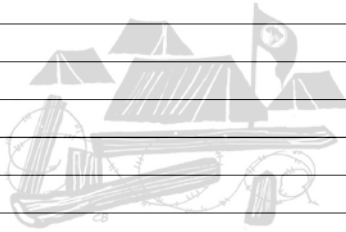
Acts 5,34-42 / Ps 26

Jn 6,1-15

- 1695: † Juana Inés de la Cruz, Mexican poet.
- 1803: Toussaint L'Ouverture, Haitian liberation hero, dies in a French prison.
- 1990: Tiberio Fernández and his companions are martyred in Trujillo, Colombia for their defense of human rights.
- 1996: The Massacre of Eldorado do Carajás, Pará, Brazil. The State military police kill 23 people.
- 1998: César Humberto López, of Frater-Paz, is assassinated in San Salvador.

International Campesino Day

This is the «Labor Day» of campesinos.



18 Saturday

Acts 6,1-7 / Ps 32

Jn 6,16-21

- 1537: Francisco Marroquín, first bishop ordained in the New World, founder of the first schools and hospitals, pastor in Guatemala.
- 1955: The Conference of Bandung, Indonesia, where the Non-Aligned Movement is founded.
- 1955: Albert Einstein, Nobel laureate, dies.
- 1998: Eduardo Umaña Mendoza, Colombian lawyer who fought for human rights and denounced paramilitaries, is assassinated.

New Moon: 18h57m (UTC) in Aries



April

19

Third Sunday of Easter

Acts 3,13-15.17-19 / Ps 4

1Jn 2,1-5 / Lk 24,35-48

León, Ema

Olavus Petri

- 1925: U.S. Marines land at La Ceiba, Honduras.
- 1980: Juana Tum, mother of Rigoberta Menchú, and her son Patrocino are martyred in the struggle for land and justice in Quiché, Guatemala.
- 2005: Adolfo Scilingo, condemned in Spain to 640 years of prison for his participation in the "death flights" during the Argentinean dictatorship.

Pan-American Indian Day



20 Monday

Acts 6,8-15 / Ps 118
Jn 6,22-29

Sulpicio
1586: Rose of Lima is born in Lima, Peru.
1871: The Brazilian Franciscans free the slaves in all their convents.
1898: Spanish American War begins. U.S. forces invade Cuba, Guam, the Philippines and Puerto Rico.
1980: Indigenous leaders martyred in Veracruz, Mexico.

21 Tuesday

Acts 7,51-8,1a / Ps 30
Jn 6,30-35

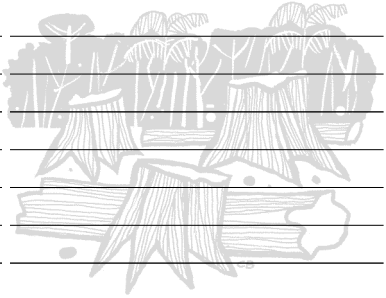
Anselmo
Mohammed is born. Day of Forgiveness for the World.
The birth of Rama, Sikh Religion.
1792: Joaquín da Silva Xavier, «Tiradentes» (Teeth Puller), precursor of Brazilian Independence, decapitated.
1960: Brasília is established as the capital of Brazil.
1965: Pedro Albizu Campos, Puerto Rican independence leader, dies.
1971: F. Duvalier dies, Haiti.
1989: Juan Sisay, popular artist, martyred for his faith at Santiago Atitlán, Guatemala.
1997: Gaudino dos Santos, Pataxó Indian, burned to death in Brasília by several youth.

22 Wednesday

Acts 8,1b-8 / Ps 65
Jn 6,35-40

Sotero, Cayo, Agapito
1500: Pedro Alvares Cabral lands in Brazil, beginning of the invasion of the South.
1519: Cortés lands in Veracruz with 600 soldiers, 16 horses and some pieces of artillery.
1914: U.S. Marines seize the customs house, Veracruz, Mexico.
1970: Earth Day first celebrated.
1982: Félix Tecu Jerónimo, Achí campesino, catechist and delegate of the Word, Guatemala.
1997: The army attacks the Japanese embassy in Lima killing 14 militants of the MRTA occupying it.
2009: The remains of Bishop Angelelli are exhumed to confirm the status of his death as a martyr.

Mother Earth Day (UN)



April

23 Thursday

Acts 8,26-40 / Ps 65

George, Toyohiko Kagawa
1971: Indigenous peoples rise up against nuclear testing that contaminates the island of Anchitks, Alaska.
1993: César Chávez, Mexican-American labor activist, dies.

World Book and Copyright Day

Since on this day in 1616 Inca Garcilaso de la Vega, Miguel de Cervantes and William Shakespeare all died.

24 Friday

Acts 9,1-20 / Ps 116

Fidel
1915/17: Death and deportation of almost one and a half million Armenians
1965: 40,000 U.S. soldiers invade the Dominican Republic.
1985: Laurita Lopez, a catechist, is martyred for her faith in El Salvador.

25 Saturday

1Pet 5,5b-14 / Ps 88

Mark
1667: Pedro de Betancourt, apostle to the poor of Guatemala, dies.
1974: Carnation Revolution restores democracy to Portugal.
1975: The Indigenous Association of the Argentinean Republic (AIRA) is established.

First quarter: 23h55m (UTC) in Leo



April

26

Fourth Sunday of Easter

Acts 4,8-12 / Ps 117

1Jn 3,1-2 / Jn 10,11-18

Anacleto, Marcelino, Isidoro.

1995: Quim Vallmajó, Spanish missionary, assassinated in Rwanda.

1998: Bishop Juan José Gerardi is assassinated after publication of the church report "Guatemala: Never Again" on massive human rights abuses.

HUMAN RIGHTS OF THE INDIGENOUS PEOPLE

IN THE HISTORICAL MIRROR OF THE CONQUEST

PABLO SUESS

São Paulo, SP, Brazil

The defence of Indigenous Human Rights started very elementary with arguments on the recognition of their humanity. Two strategies were laid down from the start of the conquest: to recognise the humanity of the indigenous, as a presupposition of its mission, and to protect this humanity by means of their slavery or serfdom.

What happened in the "West Indies" since the first contact of its inhabitants with the conqueror? Columbus tells us of the nice atmosphere of this encounter in his diary, on 11 October 1492: "They showed great friendship, because I perceived these people would better surrender and convert to our faith through love than through force". On the next day, 12 October, Columbus qualifies the indigenous as "good servants". All through the diary of his first voyage, he talks 77 times of gold, and proposes to send slaves to the metropolis in exchange of basic commodities. From 1497, the conquerors charged the indigenous, apart from gold and cotton, with forced labour through the "repartición o encomienda" (entrustment), which, according to Bartolomé de las Casas, was a "tyrannical pest".

In the first half of the XVI Century we can distinguish three modes of fight for the human rights of the indigenous people, whose protagonists were three Dominican priests, Antonio Montesinos, Francisco de Vitoria and Las Casas: the prophetic, the legal and the pastoral modality. The prophetic attitude of Montesinos denounced the barbaric deeds against the indigenous people. The legal road taken by Vitoria tried to define the legal bases of the new administration in the Americas. Finally, the pastoral proposal of de Las Casas was a synthesis between the prophetic and the legal.

1. Montesinos' Sermon (Santo Domingo 1511)

The Dominicans arrived in 1519 to the island La Española, today divided between Haiti and the Dominican Republic. Just one year of missionary practice was enough to perceive that the greatest obstacle for conversion and the catechism of the indigenous was not their idolatry but the failure to recog-

nise their dignity and their rights. The sinner of the "new world" is not the "pagan" but the "Christian" coloniser. The Dominican did not try to prove the conquest was unjust, but tried to defend the indigenous against the "excesses" of that conquest.

On the fourth Sunday of Advent 1511, the Dominican community of Santo Domingo designated Montesinos as spokesman of a prophetic sermon in defence of the native population in the island. From the pulpit of his church of hay and before the King officials, Montesinos proclaimed: "I am the voice of Christ in the desert of this island [...]: You are all in mortal sin, and in it you live and die because of the cruelty and tyranny you use with this innocent people. Say, under which right and with which justice do you have under such cruel and horrible serfdom these indigenous people? [...] Are they not human beings? Do not they have rational souls?"

In few words, Montesinos describes the scandal of La Española: horrible serfdom, despicable wars, extermination, forced labour of the indigenous and mortal sin of the conquerors. The accusation of mortal sin represented the loss of legitimacy of the conquest. Both parties looked for political support in Spain, where they sent their envoys: Franciscano Alonso de Espinal for the colonising party, and Montesinos to defend the indigenous.

On 16 March 1512, from Burgos, the Dominican provincial, Alfonso de Loaisa, condemned Montesinos and his community to an "obsequious silence lato senso", forbidding them to pronounce themselves about the serfdom of the indigenous people. Loaisa justifies this measure: "These islands were obtained by his Highness *jure belli* and his Holiness made a donation of this to our king, therefore there is no place or reason for serfdom". The prophetic voice was silenced under the threat of excommunication.

The prophetic act of Montesinos was not in vain: it is in the origin of the legal arguments that tried, through an indigenous legislation, to legitimate the conquest and restrain its excesses. But the conquest itself was already an excess; and until today it is

Translation by Alice Méndez

impossible to install within the injustice, islands of consolidated human rights.

2. Burgos Laws (1512), Francisco de Vitoria re-reads (1539) and New Laws (1542).

The prophetic cry of Montesinos was discussed by legal theologians who came to a consensus around seven propositions which, later, served as principles for the so called "Burgos Laws", in 1512. Summarising, the legal theologians decided that the indigenous: are free, must be educated in the faith, must work for the colonisers, be paid and have houses and lands of their own. The preamble of the Laws (*Ordenanzas*) of Burgos declares the indigenous "inclined by nature to idleness and bad habits". There is in the Burgos Laws a great preoccupation for a Church at the service of the "encomienda", through catechism, sacraments, moral and temples. Protective measures try to preserve the labour force for the colonisers and the physical life of the newcomers to the Church.

Pedro de Córdoba, the principal of the Dominicans in La Española, who arrived in Spain to assist Montesinos, saw in the recently enactment of the law of Burgos "the doom of the indigenous", despite it had been made by so many legal and theological authorities, even the Dominicans. Even when it tries to mediate in a contradictory reality, legislation always favours the dominant class.

The Dominican Francisco de Vitoria (1492-1546), professor in Salamanca since 1526, played the role of legal-theological mediator between the State, the Church and the Indigenous. In two of his *Relecciones* (*De indis/De jure belli*, 1539), a kind of summary of the course recently given, Vitoria deals with the question of "just war" against the indigenous, as distant moderator who was never in America. He dismissed a series of titles which, up to that time, had been considered legitimate. Among the "legitimate titles", by which "the barbarians could stay under the power of the Spanish", he mentions the propagation of Christian religion. The proclamation may be forced, the conversion must arise from free and spontaneous will. Other reasons to declare the war "fair", according to Vitoria, are the return of the indigenous to idolatry, the wish of the indigenous to be governed by the kings of Spain, inter-ethnic wars, natural communication and exchange of goods through commerce.

Through the Old Testament, Vitoria tried to show the war was lawful within natural law, and concludes

that the Gospel does not forbid what natural law allows. Vitoria created the legal bases for the "New Laws", 1542, that eliminated some arbitrary actions against the indigenous, but they were still far from protecting the rights of the indigenous people. The Human Rights of the indigenous are born with the bias of the European conqueror.

3. Board of Valladolid (1550): Sepulveda/Las Casas

By the end of 1539, Las Casas returns to Spain to defend the indigenous in Court, before Charles V, where political decisions are made. In Court the imperial historian Juan Gines de Sepulveda (1490-1573) was also present. With Sepulveda and Las Casas were the defender of the nationalist imperialism and the defender of the evangelical values assumed by Christianity. Sepulveda summarised his thought in *Democrates alter*, a book which the Indies Council refused licence. Sepulveda was able to publish a summary in his "Advocacy in favour of the book about fair causes of war" (Rome 1550). According to him, with the conquest and submission, the indigenous receive the benefits of civilization: iron, agriculture and development of its rationality. Las Casas, with his knowledge of reality as Bishop in Chiapas (1544-46) could deny the ideological statements of Sepulveda.

Considering the implications of Sepulveda's thesis, the Empire's interests and Christian ethics at play, the Emperor summoned the Board of Valladolid, composed by legal men and theologians, for 15 August 1550. The parties prepared their arguments which, for many days, were read alternately. Frei Domingo de Soto, one of the theologians who had to try the cause at stake and who was chairman of the debates, summarized the dispute for the Emperor in his "Herein is found a dispute or controversy between the Bishop Bartolome de las Casas, Bishop who was of the regal city of Chiapas, and Doctor Gines Sepulveda, chronicler of the Emperor, the doctor defending the conquests of the Indies as lawful, and the Bishop stating that they are tyrannical, unjust and illegal", (Seville, 1552).

The indigenous question of the XVI Century continues to be a seismograph that registers political, economic and ideological commotions. At that time, Las Casas was not yet the defender of a universalism beyond Christianity. He still admitted slavery of African people in America, accepted the "fair war" against Turks and Muslims. In the defence of the indigenous he was, nevertheless, unyielding.

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday
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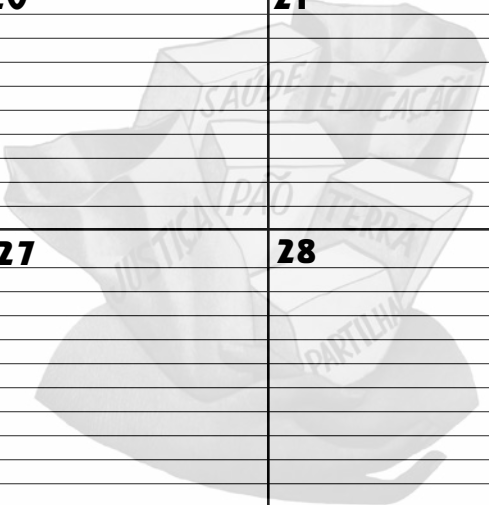
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27 Monday

Acts 11,1-18 / Ps 41
Zita, Montserrat
Jn 10,1-10
1977: Rodolfo Escamilla, a Mexican priest, is murdered by a death squad targeting social activists.
1994: First democratic general election in South Africa.

28 Tuesday

Acts 11,19-26 / Ps 86
Peter Chanel
Jn 10,22-30
1688: The Portuguese Royal Letter reestablishes slavery and a just war against Indigenous peoples.
1965: Lyndon Johnson orders the invasion of the Dominican Republic.
1985: Cleúsa Carolina Coelho, Religious, is assassinated for defending the Indigenous peoples of Labrea, Brazil.
1987: Ben Linder, a development worker, is murdered by U.S.-funded Contras in Nicaragua.

29 Wednesday

Acts 12,24-13,5 / Ps 66
Catherine of Sienna
Jn 12,44-50
1982: Enrique Alvear, bishop and prophet of the Chilean Church, dies.
1991: Moisés Cisneros Rodríguez, a Marist priest, martyred due to violence and impunity in Guatemala.
2009: Judge Garzón opens a process to judge those responsible for torture in the Guantánamo prison during the Bush administration.

National Day of Mourning for Workplace Deaths (Canada)



30 Thursday

Acts 13,13-25 / Ps 88
 Pius V
 Jn 13,16-20
 1803: USA agrees to pay France 60 million francs for its Louisiana Territory.
 1948: Twenty-one countries sign the founding charter of the OAS (Organization of American States) in Bogota.
 1977: The Mothers of May Square is formed to witness to the violation of human rights in Argentina.

1 Friday

Acts 13,26-33 / Ps 2
 Joseph the Worker
 Philip and James
 1980: Conrado de la Cruz, priest, and Herlindo Cifuentes, catechist, are kidnapped and killed in Guatemala.
 1981: Raynaldo Edmundo Lemus Preza from the Guadalupe Christian Base Community of Soyapango, El Salvador, and his friend, Edwin Lainez, are disappeared for their Christian commitment.

International Labor Day

2 Saturday

Acts 13,44-52 / Ps 97
 Athanasius
 Day of the Honduran Martyrs (First Sunday of May)
 1979: Ten year-old Luis Alfonso Velásquez is murdered by the Somoza dictatorship in Nicaragua.
 1997: Paulo Freire, Brazilian educator and liberationist author of "Pedagogy of the Oppressed," dies.
 1981: The Indigenous Nations Union is founded in Brazil.
 1994: Sebastián Larrosa, campesino student, martyr to solidarity among the poor, Paraguay.



May

3

Fifth Sunday of Easter
 Acts 9,26-31 / Ps 21
 1Jn 3,18-24 / Jn 15,1-8
 Philip and James
 1500: Fray Henrique de Coimbra, first European missionary to touch Brazilian soil.
 1963: The police force in Birmingham, Alabama violently repress civil rights protestors.
 1991: Felipe Huete, delegate of the Word, and four companions are martyred during the agrarian reform in El Astillero, Honduras.

4

Monday

Acts 14,5-18 / Ps 113

Jn 14,21-26

Ciriaco, *Mónica*

1493: Pope Alexander VI issues a papal bull "Inter caetera" dividing the new world between Spanish and Portuguese crowns.

1521: † Pedro de Córdoba, first American catechism's author.
1547: † Cristóbal de Pedraza, bishop of Honduras, «Father of the Indigenous peoples».

1970: Four students die when the Ohio National Guard opens fire on an anti-Vietnam war protest at Kent State University.

2010: Martínez de Hoz, ideological superminister of the dictatorship, is arrested at the age of 84, Buenos Aires.

Full Moon: 03h42m (UTC) in Scorpio



5

Tuesday

Acts 14,19-28 / Ps 144

Jn 14,27-31a

Máximo

1862: Mexico defeats the French in Puebla.

1893: Birth of Farabundo Martí in Teotepeque, Department of La Libertad, El Salvador.

1980: Isaura Esperanza, Legion of Mary catechist who identified with the struggle of the Salvadoran people, is martyred.

2001: Barbara Ann Ford, a Sister of Charity, is assassinated in Quiché, Guatemala.

6

Wednesday

Acts 15,1-6 / Ps 121

Jn 15,1-8

Heliodoro

1977: Oscar Alarjarin, Methodist activist, is martyred in the cause of solidarity in Argentina.

1994: The Constitutional Court of Colombia legalizes "personal doses" of narcotics.



7 Thursday

Acts 15,7-21 / Ps 95

Augusto, Flavia, Domitila
 1937: Sentencing of Prestes to 16 years of prison, Brazil.
 1539: Guru Nanak, founder of Sikhism, dies.
 1984: Idalia López, 18 year-old catechist and humble servant of the people, is assassinated by civil defense forces in El Salvador.

8 Friday

Acts 15,22-31 / Ps 56

Víctor y Acacio
 1753: Birth of Miguel Hidalgo, Father of Mexico.
 1770: Carlos III orders "the various Indigenous languages to be extinguished and Spanish be imposed."
 1987: Vincente Cañas, a Jesuit missionary, is murdered by people seeking to take land from indigenous people he was accompanying in Mato Grosso, Brazil.
 1989: Dutch priest Nicolas van Kleef is assassinated by a soldier at Santa Maria, Panama.

International Red Cross Day

9 Saturday

Acts 16,1-10 / Ps 99

Pacomio, Gregorio Ostiense
 1502: Columbus sails from Cadiz, Spain on his fourth and final voyage to the Caribbean.
 1982: Luis Vallejos, Archbishop of El Cuzco, Peru, committed to the 'preferential option for the poor' dies in a mysterious 'accident' after receiving death threats.
 1994: Nelson Mandela takes office as President of South Africa after the first multiracial elections in the history of the country. He was S. Africa's longest serving living political prisoner.

MAY

10

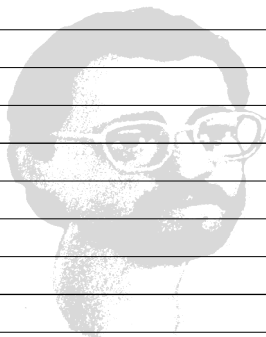
Sixth Sunday of Easter

Acts 10,25-26.34-35.44-48 / Ps 97

1Jn 4,7-10 / Jn 15,9-17

Juan de Ávila, Antonio
 1795: José Leonardo Chirino, Afro-American, leads the Coro insurrection of Indigenous and Black peoples, Venezuela.
 1985: Ime García, priest, and Gustavo Chamorro, activist, are martyred for their commitment to justice and human development in Guanabana, Colombia.
 1986: Josimo Morais Tavares, priest and land reform advocate, murdered by a large landowner in Imperatriz, Brazil.

Josimo Morais



11 Monday

Acts 16,11-15 / Ps 149

Jn 15,26-16,4a

Anastasius

1974: Carlos Mugica, priest in the 'villas miserias' of Argentina, dies in their defense. www.carlosmugica.com.ar

1977: Alfonso Navarro, priest, and Luis Torres, altar server, martyrs in El Salvador.

Last quarter: 10h36m (UTC) in Aquarius



12 Tuesday

Acts 16,22-34 / Ps 137

Jn 16,5-11

Nereo, Aquiles, Pancracio

Day dedicated to Anastasia, a slave who symbolizes all the Afro-Americans who have been raped and tortured to death by White hacienda owners, Brazil.

1957: The ILO (Intl L'nabor Organization) adopts Convention 107 on Indigenous and Tribal Peoples that protects them.

1885: Métis armed resistance to Canadian expansion ends at Batoche, Saskatchewan.

1980: Walter Voodeckers, a Belgian missionary committed to the cause of the campesinos, is martyred in Escuintla, Guatemala.

13 Wednesday

Acts 17,15,22-18,1 / Ps 148

Jn 16,12-15

Fatima

1888: Slavery is abolished in Brazil.

1977: Luis Aredez, medical doctor, is martyred for his solidarity with the poor of Argentina.

1998: The headquarters of the Justice and Peace Commission of the National Conference of Religious of Colombia is invaded by the army.

May

14 Thursday

Acts 1,15-17,20-26 / Ps 112

Mathias

Jn 15,9-17

1811: Independence of Paraguay. National Holiday.

1980: Massacre of the Sumpul River, El Salvador, where more than 600 persons perished.

1980: Juan Caccya Chipana, worker, activist, victim of police repression in Peru.

1981: Carlos Gálvez Galindo, priest, martyred in Guatemala.

1988: Campesino martyrs for the cause of peace, Cayara, Peru.

1991: Porfirio Suny Quispe, activist and educator, martyr to justice and solidarity in Peru.

15 Friday

Acts 18,9-18 / Ps 46

Jn 16,20-23a

Isidro, Juana de Lestonnac

1903: Victoriano Lorenzo, Panamanian guerrilla leader and national hero, is shot at Chiriqui.

1986: Nicolás Chuy Cumes, evangelical journalist, is martyred in the cause of freedom of expression in Guatemala.

1987: Indigenous martyrs, victims of land evictions, Bagadó, Colombia.

International Family Day (UN)

16 Saturday

Acts 18,23-28 / Ps 46

Jn 16,23b-28

John Nepomucene, Ubaldo

1818: King João II welcomes Swiss settlers fleeing hunger in their homeland to Brazil.

1981: Edgar Castillo, a journalist, is assassinated in Guatemala.

17

The Ascension of the Lord

Acts 1,1-11 / Ps 46

Eph 1,17-23 / Mk 16,15-20

Pascal Baylon

1961: USA begins a commercial blockade against Cuba in reaction to the governmental agrarian reform.

1980: Attack by Sendero Luminoso on a polling station in the town of Chuschi, Peru, marks the beginning of two decades of violence and repression.

World Telecommunication Day. A call to eliminate the imbalance in the production of messages and programs.

18 Monday

Acts 19,1-8 / Ps 67
Jn 16,29-33

Rafaela Mª Porras

1525: Founding of Trujillo (Honduras).

1781: José Gabriel Condoranki, Tupac Amaru II, leader of an indigenous rebellion in Peru and Bolivia, is executed.

1895: Augusto C. Sandino, Nicaraguan patriot, is born.

1950: The National Black Women's Council meets in Rio de Janeiro.

New Moon: 04h13m (UTC) in Taurus

19 Tuesday

Peter Celestine

1895: José Martí, Cuban national hero, dies in the struggle for independence.

1995: Jaime Nevares dies, bishop of Neuquén, prophetic voice of the Argentinean Church.

1997: Manoel Luis da Silva, landless farmer, is assassinated at São Miguel de Taipu, Brazil.

Acts 20,17-27 / Ps 67
Jn 17,1-11a

20 Wednesday

Bernardine of Sienna

1506: Christopher Columbus dies in Valladolid (Spain).

1976: Exiled Uruguayan politicians Hector Gutiérrez and Zelmar Michelini are murdered in Argentina as part of the U.S. supported Operation Condor.

1981: Pedro Aguilar Santos, priest, martyr to the cause of the poor, Guatemala.

1993: Destitution of the President of Venezuela, Carlos Andrés Pérez.

1998: Francisco de Assis Araujo, chief of the Xukuru, is assassinated at Pesqueira, Pernambuco, Brazil.

Tupac Amaru II



May

Acts 22,30;23,6-11 / Ps 15
Felicia y Gisela, *John Eliot* Jn 17,20-26
1897: Gregorio Luperón, independence hero of the Dominican Republic, dies in Puerto Plata.
1981: Pedro Aguilar Santos, priest, martyr, Guatemala.
1991: Irene McCormack, missionary, and companions, are martyred in the cause of peace in Peru.

Acts 22,30;23,6-11 / Ps 15

Jn 17,20-26

Joaquina Vedruna, Rita de Casia

1937: Government massacre of members of a messianic community at Caldeirão, Brazil.

1942: Mexico declares war on Axis powers.

1965: Requested by the United States. Brazil sends 280 soldiers to support a State Coup in Santo Domingo.

Acts 25,13-21 / Ps 102
Joaquina Vedruna, Rita de Casia Jn 21,15-19
1937: Government massacre of members of a messianic
community at Caldeirão, Brazil.
1942: Mexico declares war on Axis powers.
1965: Requested by the United States. Brazil sends 280
soldiers to support a State Coup in Santo Domingo.

Acts 25,13-21 / Ps 102

Jn 21,15-19

23 Acts 28,16-20.30-31 / Ps 10
Desiderio, *Ludwig Nommensen* Jn 21,20-25
1977: Elisabeth Käseman, German Lutheran activist, is
martyred in the cause of the poor in Buenos Aires,
Argentina
2008: The constitutive treaty of the Union of South American
Nations (UNASUR) brings together 12 countries of
South America.

Acts 28.16-20.30-31 / Ps 10

Jn 21,20-25

1977: Elisabeth Käseman, German Lutheran activist, is martyred in the cause of the poor in Buenos Aires, Argentina

2008: The constitutive treaty of the Union of South American Nations (UNASUR) brings together 12 countries of South America.

World Cultural Diversity Day (UN)

International Day for Biodiversity

22% of mammal species are in danger of extinction as are 23 % of amphibians and 25% of reptiles. Between 1970 and 2005, globally, biodiversity was reduced by 30%.

Week of Solidarity with the Peoples of Non-Self-Governing Territories

24

Vincent of Lerins

1822: Battle of Pichincha, Independence of Ecuador.

1986: Ambrosio Mogorrón, a Spanish nurse, and his campesino companions are martyred in the cause of solidarity in San José de Bocay, Nicaragua.

2005: Edickson Roberto Lemus, campesino organizer, assassinated El Progreso, Honduras.

2011: The marriage of environmentalists Jose Claudio Ribeiro da Silva and Maria Do Espirito Santo, in Nova Ipxuna, PA, Brazil, assassinated for their struggle against lumber companies.

Pentecost

Acts 2.1-11 / SPs 103

1Cor 12.3b-7.12-13 / Jn 20.19-23

25 Monday

Sir 17,20-28 / Ps 31

Vicenta López Vicuña
Gregory VII

1810: The May Revolution marks the beginning of self-government in Argentina.

1987: Bernard López Arroyave, a priest, is martyred by landowners and Colombian military.

**Week of solidarity with people
in all colonial territories (UN)**

First quarter: 17h19m (UTC) in Virgo



26 Tuesday

Sir 35,1-15 / Ps 49

Philip Neri, Mariana Paredes

1969: Enrique Pereira Neto, 28 year old priest, martyr for justice in Recife, Brazil.

1989: Maria Gómez, Colombian teacher and catechist, martyred for her commitment to her Simitri people.

27 Wednesday

Sir 36,1-2a-5-6.13-19 / Ps 78

Augustine of Canterbury
John Calvin

1514: Conversion of Bartolomé de Las Casas to the Indigenous People's Cause.

1812: Women from Cochabamba join the fight for independence against Spain at the Battle of La Coronilla in Bolivia.

1975: Quechua becomes an official language of Peru.

2008: 98 ex-agents of the DINA (local Intelligence Agency), are imprisoned for "Operation Colombo" in which 119 people were assassinated.

2011: Adelino Ramos, peasant leader, victim for his struggle against a destructive landowner in Porto Velho, RO, Brazil.



28 Thursday

Christ High Priest / Gen 14,18-20
Emilio y Justo Ps 109 / 1Cor 11,23-26 / Lk 9,11b-17
1830: U.S. President Andrew Jackson signs The Indian Removal Act, thus paving the way for the forced relocation of Native Americans from southeastern states.
1926: A State Coup brings right-wing Salazar to power in Portugal until his death in 1970.
1993: Javier Cirujano, a missionary, is martyred for peace and solidarity in Colombia.
2001: The French justice system indicts Henry Kissinger, implicated in the assassination of French citizens under Pinochet.
2004: Central America signs a Free Trade Agreement with the USA, to be ratified by the Congress of each country.

29 Friday

Maximino, *Jiri Tranovsky*
Sir 44,1,9-13 / Ps 149 Mk 11,11-26
1969: The «cordobazo»: a social explosion against the dictatorship of Onganía, in Cordoba, Argentina.
1978: Guatemalan soldiers open fire on Mayan Q'eqchi demonstrators seeking recovery of ancestral lands in Panzos.
1980: Raimundo Ferreira Lima, "Gringo", a peasant labor union organizer, is martyred in Brazil.
2009: One of the soldiers who executed Victor Jara is detained in Santiago, Chile, after 35 years.

30 Saturday

Sir 51,17-27 / Ps 18 Mk 11,27-33
Fernando, Joan of Arc
1431: 19 year old Joan of Arc is burned at the stake by a pro-English tribunal.
1961: Dominican dictator, Rafael Leónidas Trujillo, is assassinated.
1994: Maria Cervellona Correa, Franciscan sister and defender of the Mby'a people of Paraguay, dies.

MAY

31

Visitation of Mary

1986: First meeting of Afro-American pastoral workers in Duque de Caxias and São João de Meriti, Brazil
1990: Clotario Blest dies: first president of the Chilean Labor Federation (CUT), Christian labor prophet.

World Day without Tobacco

The Most Holy Trinity
Deut 4,32-34,39-40 / Ps 32
Rom 8,14-17 / Mt 28,16-20

WE ALL HAVE THE SAME RIGHT TO THE LAND

JOÃO PEDRO STÉDILE

São Paulo, SP, Brazil

The right to land may be studied based in how societies have organised their laws throughout history to distribute the right to land among their members... or from the biological point of view: how our reproduction as living beings depends on the access to three basic sources of energy, which are the sun, water and land. Here we are going to deal with this topic from the standpoint of political economy, which tries to analyse how society has been organising the right to the use and property of land. In the academy and economic literature this topic is known as the “agrarian matter”.

Since we emerged as homo sapiens about 200 thousand years ago, the wise human beings, started to organise themselves in social groups and always lived in groups. In the beginnings of civilization they organised themselves as primitive communism. They all had the same rights. They all worked, and shared the goods according to the needs of each person and family. The land was seen as a common dwelling place, it was part of the collective, and all had the same right to use it, dwell on it, plant it. They did not have a sense of property. Most of the groups were nomads: when the produce of the land was not enough to cover their needs, they migrated to another place.

With a growing population and scarcity of natural goods, disputes over land started to appear among human groups. The result was the emergence of a new mode of organization of society: slavery. Social inequality appeared and the first opposing social classes: the owners of the land who possessed slaves, and the subordinate, the slaves, who did not have any rights, not even the right to live.

The population continued growing and lands were divided among clans, who through military force organised people in feuds. Each feud organised the production for its needs. There we no exchange between them, nor currency. In this new method of production and organisation of society,

nobility occupied castles, took care of security, goods, and war with possible enemies. The land was occupied by peasants who cultivated it with their families. In this way the peasantry appeared as social class. They had the right to live on the land, cultivate it, and use it, but they had no right over it. And the fruit of their labour was mandatorily shared with the nobility through the payment of a tax on the produce (around a 50%) and over the labour, which made them work for no pay some days a week for the nobility.

In the XIII century a capitalist way of organising production and society appeared. Feudalism is abandoned and cities emerge as commercial centres. Goods are turned into merchandise that is bought and sold in the market. Currency emerges, as a means of circulation of merchandise. And from here appears the capital, the way to accumulate riches with money, reinvest it in commerce of merchandise, and continue accumulating. During the time of mercantile capitalism (XII-XVIII centuries), in most territories, peasants rebelled against the nobility, started revolts, wars that lasted decades and even centuries. This intense fight was motivated by the need of the peasantry to have the legal right over the land, apart from being able to live and cultivate it. That is, they did not want to pay rent over the produce nor over the labour to the oligarchic nobility, who considered themselves owners of all the lands. In many countries peasants as a class conquered this right with much fighting. In others they continued to be exploited.

Since the industrial revolution, in 1750, and the emergence of a new dominant class, the industrial bourgeoisie, there were new changes in the way of organising agriculture production, as machinery appeared together with new tools and agri-inputs. But the most significant change was the introduction, for the first time, of the private property of land. The industrial bourgeoisie organised the State, as we know it today, with its three powers

Translation by Alice Méndez

(executive, parliamentary and judicial), and reorganised the law. It introduced for the first time the right to private property of land, of a limited space of land. From then land was turned into a special kind of merchandise, which capitalists, or whoever had the money/capital, could buy and sell. The right of people to have individual and exclusive sovereignty over a piece of land, recognised by law and guaranteed by the State, was created. The fence was born! to limit the sovereignty of capital, of the private owner, over an asset of nature.

Once again, peasants rebelled, many social fights and revolts emerged. In this way in many countries governments, even the industrial bourgeoisie, had to yield the right to private ownership of the land to peasants. These programmes that pretended a democratic access to the right of land property for all the peasants were known then as AGRARIAN REFORM. In other words, governments used the State under their control to apply a law that evicted big landowners, who had monopolised the right to the land for themselves, and delivered the ownership of the land to the peasants, who in many cases already had the right to its use, but not the right to live on the land and to hand it down to their children.

During the XX century, in some countries, the contradictions returned and social antagonisms were deepened. With industrial capitalism popular revolutions of a socialist character appeared, that is to say they desired to overcome even capitalism and destroy the bourgeoisie as a social class. These were the victorious popular revolutions in Russia (1917), China (1927-49), Yugoslavia (1945), Mongolia (1950), Korea (1953-56), Vietnam (1954-75) and Cuba (1959). In most of these countries a development of the concept of the right to land was attempted, and the concept that the land belongs to all was introduced, but has to be "administered" by the nation, represented now by the socialist State. In those countries, peasants had the right to work the land, to hand it down to their children, but the land ceased to be a merchandise and private property. Nobody can buy or sell land, which becomes just land to be worked, to produce the

necessary goods for all society.

Around 1980/90, industrial capitalism went into a crisis and this had an effect on all production and also working classes. From this crisis the bourgeoisie imposed a new stage of capitalism, now dominated by financial capital and multinational companies which came to dominate the globalised market of merchandise. The new stage has been given an ideological name "neo-liberalism", implying that to come out of the crisis only the market and a "new and absolute freedom for capital" can save "humanity".

The stage of financial and globalised capitalism brought deep changes in the concept of land ownership. The financial capital overcame the barriers of borders between nations and started to invest and buy immense areas of land in the planet, imposing private property even more concentrated in fewer hands. And they evicted millions of peasants. For the first time in history of humankind the urban population surpassed the rural one.

Via Campesina Internacional, which gathers peasant movements of more than a hundred countries, together with other popular forces, with environment movements, with churches and with scholars and researchers, raise their voice, defending other paradigms for nature and the Earth. They should neither be private property nor a source of financial gain. Agriculture must have as its main priority the production of healthy food, which is the necessary energy for the reproduction of our species. And food cannot be merchandise, because it is a right, a need of every human being. The possession and use of the land must have other legal parameters. Only the person who makes a compromise to society to live on it, to work it and use it to produce food, in a balanced way and in harmony with nature can have it.

For this reason humanity needs now to generate a new legal framework, in each country, to guarantee the right of everyone to a good living, producing safe energy (food) for reproduction of life, in good coexistence with all living beings in the planet. We hope humanity achieves this, before it is too late!

2015

May

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1

Monday

Tob 1,3;2,1b-8 / Ps 111

Mk 12,1-12

Justin
1989: Sergio Restrepo, Jesuit priest, is martyred in his fight for the liberation of peasants of Tierralta, Colombia.

1991: João de Aquino, union president of Nueva Iguazú, Brazil, is assassinated.

2009: General Motors announces the largest suspension of payments in the industrial history of the USA with 122,550 million in debts.

2

Tuesday

Tob 2,9-14 / Ps 111

Mk 12,13-17

Pedro y Marcelino

1537: Pope Paul III issues a papal bull condemning slavery.

1987: Sebastien Morales, evangelical deacon, martyred for faith and justice in Guatemala.

Full Moon: 16h19m (UTC) in Sagittarius



3

Wednesday

Tob 3,1-11a.16-17a / Ps 24

Mk 12,18-27

Charles Luanga

John XXIII

1548: Juan de Zumárraga, bishop of Mexico, protector of the Indigenous peoples, dies.

1621: The Dutch West Indies Company gains a mercantile trade charter to aid in colonizing Americas.

1758: The Commission on Limits meets with the Yanomami people of Venezuela.

1885: St. Charles Luanga and companions, Ugandan martyrs, patrons of African youth.

1963: Pope John XXIII dies.

June



4

Thursday

Tob 6,10-11;7,1,9-17;8,4-9a / Ps 127

Francisco Caracciolo Mk 12,28b-34
 1559: El Oidor Fernando Santillán informa de las 1559: Fernando Santillán, judge, reports on the massacres of Indigenous peoples in Chile.

1980: José María Gran, missionary, and Domingo Batz, sacristan, are martyred in El Quiché, Guatemala.

1989: Chinese government violently suppresses Tiananmen Square pro-democracy demonstrators resulting in thousands of casualties.

**International Day of Innocent Children
Victims of Aggression**

5

Friday

Tob 11,5-17 / Ps 145

Boniface Mk 12,35-37
 1573: Execution of Tanamaco, Venezuelan cacique.
 1968: Robert F. Kennedy shot in Los Angeles, California.

1981: The first case in history of AIDS is discovered in Los Angeles, USA.

1988: Agustín Ramírez and Javier Sotelo, workers, are martyred in the fight for the marginalized in Buenos Aires, Argentina.

2000: The Court of Santiago removes Pinochet's immunity. He is accused of 109 crimes in the Chilean tribunals and sought internationally.

World Environment Day

6

Saturday

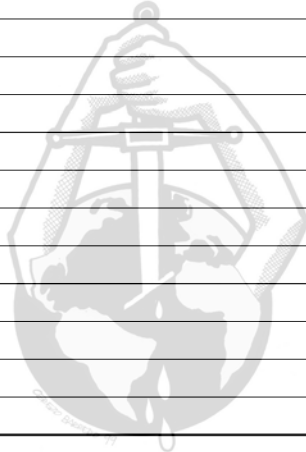
Tob 12,1,5-15,20 / Tob 13,2-8

Norbert Mk 12,38-44
 1940: Marcos Garvey, Black Jamaican leader, mentor of Pan-Africanism dies.

1980: José Ribeiro, leader of the Apuníña people, is assassinated in Brazil.

1989: Pedro Hernández and companions, indigenous leaders, martyrs in the struggle for traditional land rights in Mexico.

2014: Swiss justice sentences Erwin Sperisen the Guatemalteco-Swiss co-author of murders and tortures.



June

7

Heart of Jesus

Ex 24,3-8 / Ps 115

Heb 9,11-15 / Mk 14,12-16,22-26

Roberto, Seattle

1494: Castilla and Portugal sign the Treaty of Tordesillas, thus negotiating their expansion in the Atlantic region.

1872: Trade Union Act (Canada).

1978: The Unified Black Movement (MNU) is inaugurated.

1990: Sister Filomena Lopes Filha, apostle of the favelas, is assassinated in Nueva Iguacú, Brazil.

1998: White supremacists drag James Bryd Jr. to his death in Jasper, Texas.

2005: After 30 years of struggle, the lands of the campesinos in the Paraguayan Agrarian Leagues are returned to them.

8

Monday

2Cor 1,1-7 / Ps 33

Mt 5,1-12

Salustiano, Medardo
1706: A Royal Decree orders the capture of the first typographer of Brazil, in Recife.

1982: Luis Dalle, bishop of Ayaviri, Peru, threatened with death for his option for the poor, dies in a provoked "accident" that has never been clarified.

1984: Student leader, Willie Miranda, murdered by Guatemalan military.

9

Tuesday

2Cor 1,18-22 / Ps 118

Mt 5,13-16

Efrén, Columbano, Aidan, Bede
1597: José de Anchieta, from the Canary Islands, evangelizer of Brazil, "Principal Father" of the Guarani.

1971: Héctor Gallego, Colombian priest, disappeared in Santa Fe de Veraguas, Panama.

1979: Juan Morán, Mexican priest, martyred in defense of the indigenous Mazahuas people.

1981: Toribia Flores de Cutipa, campesino leader, victim of repression in Peru.

Last quarter: 15h42m (UTC) in Pisces



10

Wednesday

2Cor 3,4-11 / Ps 98

Mt 5,17-19

Crispulo y Mauricio
1521: The Indigenous people destroy the mission of Cumaná (Venezuela) built by Las Casas.

1835: A death penalty without appeal is ordered for any slave that kills or causes trouble for the owner, Brazil.

1898: U.S. forces land on Cuba during Spanish-American War.

1992: Norman Pérez Bello, activist, is martyred for his faith and his option for the poor.

June



11 Thursday

Barnabas Acts 11,21b-26;13,1-3 / Ps 97
Mt 10,7-13
1964: Nelson Mandela is sentenced to life in a South African prison.
1980: Ismael Enrique Pineda, Caritas organizer, and companions are disappeared in El Salvador.
2008: Canada apologizes for residential schools.

12 Friday

Heart of Jesus Hos 11,1b.3-4.8c-9 / Isa 12,2-6
Eph 3,8-12.14-19 / Jn 19,31-37
Gaspar, Juan de Sahagún
1514: The the first time the "requerimientos" are read (to Cacique Catarapa) by Juan Ayora, on the coast of Santa Marta.
1963: Medgar Evers, civil rights activist, assassinated in Jackson, Mississippi.
1981: Joaquin Nevés Norté, lawyer for the Navirai Rural Workers Union in Paraná, Brazil, is assassinated.
1935: The war over the Paraguayan Chaco ends.

World Day Against Child Labour

13 Saturday

Isa 61,9-11 / 1Sam 2,1-4-8
Lk 2,41-51
Heart of Mary
Anthony of Padua
1645: The Pernambucan Insurrection begins with the aim of expelling Dutch rule from Brazil.
1980: Walter Rodney, political activist and author of How Europe Underdeveloped Africa, is assassinated in Guyana.
2000: Argentine President Fernando de la Rúa apologizes for his country's role in harboring Nazis after World War II.
2003: The Supreme Court of Mexico orders the extradition to Spain of Ricardo Cavallo, a torturer during the Argentinean dictatorship.

June

14

Eleventh Sunday in Ordinary Time
Ezek 17,22-24 / Ps 91
2Cor 5,6-10 / Mk 4,26-34

Eliseo, *Basil the Great*,

Gregory Nazienzen, Gregory of Nyssa

1905: Sailors mutiny aboard the Russian battleship Potemkin demanding political reforms.

1977: Mauricio Silva, Uruguayan priest working with street sweepers in Buenos Aires, is kidnapped.

1980: Cosme Spessoto, Italian priest, pastor, martyr in El Salvador. 30 years.

1983: Vicente Hordanza, missionary priest at the service of the campesinos, Peru.

2005: The Supreme Court of Argentina declares unconstitutional the laws of "Due Obedience" and of "Full Stop."

15 Monday

2Cor 6,1-10 / Ps 97

M^a Micaela, Vito
 1215: Magna Carta sealed by King John of England, affirms primacy of rule of law.
 1932: Bolivia and Paraguay begin the war over the Chaco region.
 1952: Victor Sanabria, Archbishop of San José de Costa Rica, defender of social justice.
 1987: Operation Albania: 12 people are assassinated in Santiago, Chile, by security forces.
 2005: The Supreme Court of Mexico declares not-binding the crime of ex-President Echeverria for genocide due to the massacre of students in 1971.

16 Tuesday

2Cor 8,1-9 / Ps 145

Juan Francisco de Regis
 1976: Soweto Massacre claims the life of 172 students when South African police open fire on protestors.
 1976: Aurora Vivar Vásquez, champion of women's labor rights, is murdered in Peru.
 New Moon: 14h05m (UTC) in Gemini



17 Wednesday

2Cor 9,6-11 / Ps 111

Ismael y Samuel
 1703: Birth of John Wesley, England.
 1983: Felipe Pucha and Pedro Cuji, campesinos, are martyred in the struggle for land in Cullcutuz, Ecuador.
 1991: End of apartheid in South Africa.

World Anti-desertification Day

June



18 Thursday

2Cor 11,1-11 / Ps 110

Germán

1815: The defeat of the French at the Battle of Waterloo ends the Napoleonic era.

1997: Brazil approves a law permitting the privatization of Communications.

Start of Ramadan

19 Friday

2Cor 11,18.21b-30 / Ps 33

Romuald

1764: José Artigas, liberator of Uruguay and father of agrarian reform, is born.

1867: Maximiliano, Emperor imposed on México is executed by a firing squad.

1986: Massacre of El Fronton penitentiary prisoners in Lima, Peru.

20 Saturday

2Cor 12,1-10 / Ps 33

Mt 6,24-34

Silverio

Day of the African Refugee.

1820: Manuel Belgrano dies, Father of Argentina.

1973: Right-wing terrorists open fire on Peronist demonstrators killing 13, near the Ezeiza Airport in Buenos Aires.

1979: Rafael Palacios, priest, is martyred for his work with Salvadoran Christian base communities.

1995: Greenpeace wins the struggle to stop Shell and Esso from sinking the petroleum platform, Brent Spar, into the ocean, thus avoiding the sinking of 200 others as well.

World Refugee Day (UN)

June

21

Twelfth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Job 38,1.8-11 / Ps 106

2Cor 5,14-17 / Mk 4,35-40

Louis Gonzaga, Onésimo Nesib

1964: Civil rights activists; James Chaney, Michael Schwerner and Andrew Goodman are murdered by racists in Philadelphia, Mississippi.

1980: 27 union leaders from the National Workers' Central in Guatemala are disappeared. American military advisors participate.

1984: Sergio Ortiz, seminarian, is martyred during the persecution of the Church in Guatemala.

1998: Pe. Leo Comissari, mártir de los líderes sociales de São Bernardo do Campo, SP, Brasil, asesinado.

National Aboriginal Day (Canada)

Andean New Year

Solstice, summer/winter at 18h38m (UTC)

22 Monday

Gn 12,1-9 / Ps 32

John Fisher, Thomas More

1534: Benalcázar enters and sacks Quito.

1965: Arthur MacKinnon, a Canadian Scarborough missionary, is assassinated by the military at Monte Plata, Dominican Republic for his defense of the poor.

1966: Manuel Larraín, bishop of Talca, Chile and president of the Latin American bishop's organization, dies.

23 Tuesday

Gen 13,2,5-18 / Ps 14

Zenón, Marcial

1524: The "Twelve Apostles of Spain," Franciscans, arrive on the coast of Mexico.

1936: Birth of Carlos Fonseca, Nicaragua.

1967: Miners and their families die in the massacre of San Juan in Siglo XX, Bolivia.

1985: Terrorist bomb destroys Air India Flight 182 bound from Canada to India. It is the largest mass murder in Canadian history.

24 Wednesday

Isa 49,1-6 / Ps 138

Birth of John the Baptist

Acts 13,22-26 / Lk 1,57-66.80

1541: Mixton War, Indigenous rebellion against the Spanish sweeps western Mexico.

1821: Simon Bolívar leads troops in a decisive Battle of Carabobo for the independence of Venezuela.

1823: The Federation of the United Provinces of Central America is established but lasts only a short time.

First quarter: 11h02m (UTC) in Libra



June



25 Thursday

Gen 16,1-12.15-16 / Ps 105

William, Maximus

Mt 7,21-29

Confession of Ausburg, Philip Melancton

1524: Talks between priests and Aztec wise men with the "Twelve Apostles of Mexico."

1767: Mexican Indigenous riot against Spanish crown as their Jesuits missionaries are ordered to leave.

1975: Martyrs of Olancho: Colombian Ivan Betancourt and Miguel "Casimiro", priests, and seven Honduran peasant companions.

26 Friday

Gen 17,1.9-10.15-22 / Ps 127

Pelayo

Mt 8,1-4

1541: Violent death of Pizarro.

1822: Encounter between San Martín and Bolívar in Guayaquil.

1945: United Nations Charter signed in San Francisco, California.

1987: Creation of the Confederation of Indigenous Peoples of Mexico.

Internat'l Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking

International Day in Support of Torture Victims

27 Saturday

Gen 18,1-15 / Lk 1

Mt 8,5-17

Cyril of Alexandria

1552: Domingo de Santo Tomás and Tomás de San Martín, Dominicans, first bishops of Bolivia, defenders of Indigenous peoples.

1954: U.S. backed rebels overthrow the legally elected Guatemalan government of Jacobo Arbenz.

1982: Juan Pablo Rodríguez Rán, indigenous priest, is martyred in the struggle for justice in Guatemala.

1986: The International Tribunal of the Hague declares the USA "guilty of violating International Law for its aggression against Nicaragua."

2007: Brazilian military police anti-drug action results in the Complexo do Alemão massacre in Rio de Janeiro.

June

28

Thirteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Wis 1,13-15;2,23-24 / Ps 29

2Cor 8,7.9.13-15 / Mk 5,21-43

Ireneus

1890: Brazil opens the door to European immigrants; Africans and Asians can only enter with the authorization of Congress.

1918: U.S. marines land in Panama.

2001: Vladimiro Montesinos enters the prison at the Naval Base of El Callao, Peru.

HUMAN RIGHTS AND HISTORIC REMEMBRANCE

EDUARDO DE LA SERNA

Quilmes, Argentina

The long and fertile recent history of Latin America and the Caribbean is also prolific in struggles for human rights. The difficult decade of military dictatorships and authoritarian governments in this region, and the subsequent protracted decade of genocidal neo-liberalism made many women and men lift up their voices and their very own persons as standards in this battle. Dozens of people were silenced because their voices were clear and unyielding against the abuse of persons, communities, ethnic groups and entire peoples. Violations of ethnic groups in Guatemala during the government of Efraín Ríos Montt inspired Bishop Samuel Ruiz to raise his voice and accompany some 100,000 indigenous Guatemalan Chuj or Achi refugees in the Mexican state of Chiapas; Bishop Leonidas Proaño, was considered the voice¹ of indigenous communities in Ecuador and came to be called "the bishop of the Indians." Bishop Paulo Evaristo Arns, through the agency CLAMOR was the defender and living memory of the violations of persons and their rights by southern dictatorships (earning him the reproach of more than one bishop besides Cardenal Raúl Primatesta, president of the Episcopal Conference of Argentina).

To the voices of these bishops could and must be added hundreds of other violently silenced Latin American and Caribbean martyrs plus others beyond these borders. Just as an example we are neither able nor willing to ignore the memory of Rev. Martin Luther King Jr., murdered in the "land of the free" for his unwavering defense of human rights of Afro-Americans and his stance against the genocidal Vietnam War.

There is hardly a country in Latin America that does not have a large number of martyrs murdered for defending its communities, victims of a genocidal-model. Certainly not all these women and men are martyrs for having fought for human rights, but certainly many of them are, and are therefore standard bearers and witnesses. The names of two Central American bishops -- Oscar Romero and Juan José Gerardi -- are already iconic; and to these we can add others -- less known internationally -- as Yolanda Ceron, or Mario Calderon and Elsa Constanza Alvarado

(Colombia), João Bosco Penido Burnier (Brazil) / the "disappeared" men and women founders of the *Madres de la Plaza de Mayo* (Argentina), José Manuel Parada (Chile), Luis Espinal (Bolivia), María Elena Moyano (Peru) and the list could go on and on. These martyrs and witnesses are "milestones" along the by-ways of the people: road-signs indicating the 'where' and the 'destination'. The martyrs are a memory, and consequently also a future.

A very important element for the life, faith and history of the "biblical people of Israel" is to "recall to mind" (*zaqar*); this is an imperative, which on the other hand, has to do with "imposing a name" (see Jeremiah 20:9). A people who places so much importance on history, and its ability or inability to find God at work in it, has to "bring back to mind" how it responded in those special moments (Exodus 17,14, Deuteronomy 5,15; 7,18; 8,2.18 ...) just as God in this way will also "recall to mind" (Leviticus 26,42). But -- and this is something new for our western mentality -- a Jew considers the past not as "gone by", like something passed to behind his back, but rather "to come" as something that illuminates the present and orients the future. The memory is essential for traveling. It's rightly said that "a people without a memory is doomed to repeat its mistakes." Remembrance is a constituent part of the journey of the People of God; our past sin and holiness is laid out before our eyes and marks the way for us.

Violation of human rights has been something constant and systematic in our recent history; there are hundreds of thousands of dead, and we refer especially to Latin America and the Caribbean not for lack of good information, nor in any way ignoring the other regions of the Earth. There have also been many -- in the different Churches and religious communities, in civil society, in different organization, -- who spent their life and sometimes had it taken away from them in defense of the rights of other men and women. The remembrance of these persons and their struggles stand before our eyes, to point out paths; that's what they as milestones are for.

Translation by Justiniano Liebl

Unfortunately, in both civil society and many church communities, can be heard voices in favor of a so-called “reconciliation” proposing a “silenced memory”, hiding history and snuffing out the voice of the martyrs. An institution such as the Roman Catholic Church, which gives so much importance to “tradition” and in its liturgy celebrates the “memory” of the Last Supper of Jesus, and reads the Scripture as “the living memory” of a God who walks with and speaks to his people in history, such an institution ought never be complicit in such a silence -- but unfortunately on many occasions it is.

To remembrance is to reproduce an historical memory from the very beginning; it's to re-think our past, but never as just a simple remembering --like recalling by thinking, but rather as a judging: constructively criticizing or assuming values (...) approaching the truth, but with humility, with neither triumph nor false modesty, but looking only for truth, giving thanks to God for successes and extracting from errors motivation to project oneself renewed into the future. ²

It is also interesting to keep in mind the affirmation of Th. W. Adorno.:

“The question is: ‘What’s the meaning of ‘working over the past?’ It springs from an expression, which as a slogan has become very open to suspicion in recent years. In this linguistic subterfuge, processing the past does not mean seriously reworking the past and with a clear conscience breaking its spell. Rather it has come to means ending with a sheer cut off, and even if possible, erasing its very memory. The gesture of ‘forgiving and forgetting everything’ -- which by right corresponds to the victims of injustice -- is cleverly switched over into the hands of the very ones who supported those who committed the crime.” ³

Many laws or propositions of “amnesty” -- “laws of pardon” -- “steps towards a necessary reconciliation” -- are nothing more than barriers to block our eyes in the present from facing up to the past and consequently they become obstacles to walk freely into the future. The martyrs continue being silenced as such, so that their remembrance gets to be “de-memorized”. It’s neither healthy nor does it make sense that a type of ecclesial or social Alzheimer’s should determine our paths.. The subversive memory of the Nazarene and those who followed in his footsteps remains both as challenge and as commitment.

On the other hand, the struggle for Human Rights is not something that’s just a matter of the past -- even though it has branded us forever as those claiming justice as essential to being able to keep walking. The current different realities in Latin America and the Caribbean continue to focus on our having been branded; there are different kinds of governments with different kinds of pressures upon them by powerful sectors from both outside as inside. There are *MercoSur* and *Alianza del Pacífico*, *ALBA*, *CELAC*, and *UNASUR* ... These realities in general are of recent vintage, and Human Rights are on the agenda of several of them; nevertheless there are still situations that require the Human Rights struggle to never lower its arms, nor lower its flags much less forget its milestones.

The situation of indigenous and black communities does not seem to have substantially improved. Attempts by the armed forces to meddle into internal politics are requirements of “The Empire”, using the argument of terrorism and narco-traffic, with the consequent weakening of abuse control (one wonders if it is not really control of abuse but simply explicit policies); there is an incredibly powerful interference in the communication media creating situations that respond to their interests. These are just a few of the areas which these witnesses urge us to follow in memory of the martyrs and the analysis of the present and the future that have marked their footsteps. They consequently commit us never to desist from our determination to maintain alive THE REMEMBRANCE.

¹ The phrase “to be the voice of those without voice” which was applied to several of these great defenders of the poor was originally used by the “Movement of Priests for the Third World”, in Argentina, and the Image seems to hark back to Eva Peron (at least in the first part of the 50’s was the first time we’ve been able to detect it as attributed to her).

² Lucio Gera, *Commemorar el pasado y preparar el futuro: decir, orar, ser y hacer*, Sedoi 93/94, 5-6. What has been said refers to the history of the Church and to the call of the Pope to commemorate the 500th anniversary. But at the same time it seems equally valid to apply it to our Latin American history.

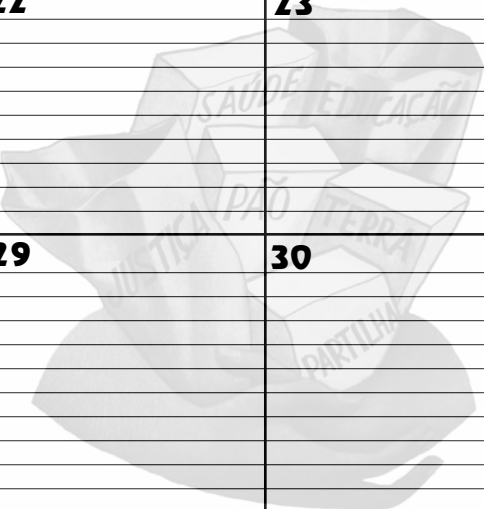
³ Th. W. Adorno, *Ensayos sobre la propaganda fascista. Psicoanálisis del antisemitismo*, Voces y Culturas, Barcelona 2003, 53.

2015

June

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15	16	17	18	19	20	21							

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday
29 Lunes	30 Martes	1 Miercoles	2 Jueves
6	7	8	9
13	14	15	16
20	21	22	23
27	28	29	30



M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	August
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29 Monday

Acts 12,1-11 / Ps 33

Peter and Paul

2Tim 4,6-8.17-18 / Mt 16,13-19

1974: Isabel Peron becomes first female president of Argentina after her husband, Juan Peron, falls ill.

1995: Land conflict in São Félix do Xingú, Brazil leaves six farmers and a policeman dead.

1997: The three "intellectual authors" of the assassination of Josimo Tavares are condemned (Brazil, 1986).

30 Tuesday

Gen 19,15-29 / Ps 25

Mt 8,23-27

Protomartyrs of Roma

John Olaf Wallin

Day of the Guatemalan Martyrs (previously, Day of the Army)

1520: "Sad Night," defeat of the conquistadores in Mexico.

1927: A.C. Sandino issues his 'Political Manifest' in Nicaragua.

1975: Dionisio Frias, a peasant, is martyred in the struggle for land in the Dominican Republic.

1978: Hermógenes López, founder of Rural Catholic Action, martyr to the campesinos, Guatemala.

2008: Manuel Contreras, ex-police chief of the during the dictatorship is condemned to two life sentences for the assassination of the former chief commander of the Chilean Army, Carlos Prats and his wife, in Buenos Aires in 1974. Seven other agents of the DINA were also condemned.

1 Wednesday

Gen 21,5.8-20 / Ps 33

Mt 8,28-34

Casto, Secundino, Aarón

Catherine Winkworth, John Mason Neale

Canadian National Holiday

1968 :Medicare begins in Canada.

1974: Juan Domingo Perón, three times president of Argentina, dies.

1981: Tulio Maruzzo, Italian priest and Luis Navarrete, catechist, are martyred in Guatemala.

1990: Mariano Delauney, teacher, is martyred in the cause of liberation education in Haiti.

2002: The International Criminal Court becomes operational in spite of US opposition.

June



2 Thursday

Gen 22,1-19 / Ps 114

Vidal, Marcial

Mt 9,1-8

1617: Rebellion of the Tupinambas (Brazil).

1823: Defeat of loyalists to the Portuguese crown in the province of Bahia leads to Brazilian monarchy.

1917: White rioters burned entire black sections of East St. Louis, Illinois shooting the inhabitants as they try to escape. 48 die.

1925: African revolutionary, Lumumba, is born.

1991: First legal Conference of the African National Congress, South Africa, alter 30 years.

Full Moon: 02h20m (UTC) in Capricorn



3 Friday

Eph 2,19-22 / Ps 116

Jn 20,24-29

Thomas the Apostle

1848: Denmark frees the slaves in their West Indian colony.

1951: The Afonso Arinos law is approved in Brazil. Discrimination because of race, color and religion is condemned as a contravention.

1978: Pablo Marcano García and Nydia Cuevas occupy the Consulate of Chile in San Juan to denounce the absurdity of celebrating the independence of the United States while denying the same to Puerto Rico.

1987: Tomás Zavaleta, a Salvadoran Franciscan, is martyred in Nicaragua.

4 Saturday

Gen 27,1-5.15-29 / Ps 134

Mt 9,14-17

Elizabeth of Portugal

1776: Independence of the USA, National Holiday.

1976: Alfredo Kelly, Pedro Dufau, Alfredo Leaden, Salvador Barbeito and José Barletti, martyrs to justice, Argentina.

1998: Neo-Nazis murder civil rights activists Daniel Shersty and Lin Newborn just outside Las Vegas, Nevada.

2014: The justice system confirms that Bishop Angelelli was assassinated and condemns two of the ex-military involved to life in prison.

July

5

Fourteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Ezek 2,2-5 / Ps 122

2Cor 12,7b-10 / Mk 6,1-6

Antonio M^a Zaccaria

1573: Execution of Tamanaco, Indigenous leader, Venezuela.

1811: Independence of Venezuela, National Holiday.

1920: Bolivia orders land to be given to "naturals."

1981: Emeterio Toj, Indigenous co-operative leader, is kidnapped and tortured by Guatemalan security forces.

2012: Rafael Videla, coup leader in 1976, charged with 50 years for the theft of babies during the Argentine dictatorship.

6

Monday

Gen 28,10-22a / Ps 90

Mt 9,18-26

María Goretti

1415: John Huss dies, in Czechoslovakia.

1907: Frida Kahlo, Mexican painter and political activist, is born.

1943: Nazaria Ignacia March Mesa dies in Buenos Aires, foundress of the Religious of the "Crusades of the Church." She founded the first women's worker's union in Latin America in Oruro (Bolivia).

1967: Biafran War erupts in Africa, over 600,000 die.

1986: Rodrigo Rojas, activist, martyr to the struggle for democracy among the Chilean people.

7

Tuesday

Gen 32,22-32 / Ps 16

Mt 9,32-38

Fermín

1976: Arturo Bernal, campesino leader of the Agrarian Leagues, dies of torture, Paraguay.

1991: Carlos Bonilla, a martyr for the right to work, dies in Citaltepetl, Mexico.

2005: Coordinated terrorist bombings on London's transit system kill 52 and injure hundreds.

8

Wednesday

Gen 41,55-57;42,5-7.17-24a / Ps 32

Mt 10,1-7

Eugenio, Adriano, Priscila

1538: Violent death of Almagro.

1954: Carlos Castillo Armas takes over presidency of Guatemala after U.S. backed coup.

1991: Martín Ayala, night guard for the Council of Marginal Communities, murdered by a Salvadoran death squad.

Last quarter: 20h24m (UTC) in Aries



July



9 Thursday

Gen 44,18-21.23b-29;45,1-5 / Ps 104

Rosario de Chiquinquirá
1793: Upper Canada legislature passes an act prohibiting slavery.
1816: At the Congress of Tucumán the United Provinces of the La Plata River declare their independence from Spain. National Holiday, Argentina.
1821: San Martín proclaims the independence of Peru.
1880: Joaquín Nabuco founds the Brazilian Society against Slavery that engaged broadly in activities in public places and clubs.
1920: Pedro Lersa, Recife, struggled for the rights of workers. Taken prisoner, he died there.

10 Friday

Gen 46,1-7.28-30 / Ps 36

Christopher
1509: Birth of Calvin, in France.
1973: Independence of the Bahamas.
1980: Faustino Villanueva, Spanish priest, martyr in the service of the Indigenous people, Guatemala.
1988: Joseph Lafontant, lawyer, martyred in defense of human rights in Haiti.
1993: Rafael Maroto Pérez, priest and tireless fighter for justice and liberty in Chile, dies.
2002: A seven-million-year-old skull is discovered in Chad; oldest known hominoid.

11 Saturday

Gen 49,29-32;50,15-26a / Ps 104

Benedict
1968: Founding of the American Indian Movement.
1977: Carlos Ponce de Leon, bishop of San Nicolás, Argentina, is martyred for the cause of justice.
1990 : Oka Crisis (Canada).
1995: Bosnian-Serb forces take-over of Srebrenica leads to the murder of more than eight thousands inhabitants.

World Population Day



July

12

Fifteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Am 7,12-15 / Ps 84
Eph 1,3-14 / Mk 6,7-13

John Gualbert

1821: Bolívar creates the Republic of Great Colombia.
1904: Pablo Neruda, Chilean Nobel Literature laureate, is born.
1917: General strike and insurrection in São Paulo.
1976: Aurelio Rueda, priest, is martyred for his work on behalf of slum dwellers in Colombia.

13 Monday

Ex 1,8-14,22 / Ps 123

Henry
1900: Juana Fernández Solar, St. Teresa de Jesús de los Andes, is born, a Chilean Carmelite.
1982: Fernando Hoyos, a Jesuit missionary, and his 15 year-old altar server are killed in a military ambush in Guatemala.
1991: Riccy Mabel Martínez raped and assassinated by the military, symbol of the struggle of the people of Honduras against military impunity.
2007: The end of legal impunity in Argentina: the Supreme Court declares the amnesty of the repressors void.

14 Tuesday

Ex 2,1-15a / Ps 68

Francisco Solano, Camilo de Lelis
Death penalty abolished (Canada)
1616: Francisco Solano, Franciscan missionary, apostle to the Indigenous peoples of Peru.
1630: Hernandarias publishes the first norms for the defense of the Indigenous people in Paraguay.
1789: The French Revolution begins with the storming of the Bastille Prison.
1969: The "Football War" breaks out between El Salvador and Honduras over the expulsion of Salvadoran settlers from Honduras.

15 Wednesday

Ex 3,1-6,9-12 / Ps 102

Bonaventure, Vladimir
1972: Héctor Jurado, a Methodist pastor, is tortured and murdered in Uruguay.
1976: Rodolfo Lunkenbein, missionary, and Lorenzo Simão martyred for the rights of the indigenous in Brazil.
1981: Misael Ramírez, campesino, community animator and martyr to justice, Colombia.
1991: Julio Quevedo Quezada, catechist, El Quiché, assassinated by the State, Guatemala.

July



16 Thursday

Ex 3,13-20 / Ps 104

Carmen
1750: José Gumilla, missionary, defender of the Indigenous people, Venezuela.
1769: Founding of mission of San Diego de Alcalá marks expansion of Spanish colonization into California.
1976: Carmelo Soria, a Spanish diplomat who granted asylum to opponents of the Pinochet regime, found assassinated in Santiago, Chile.
1982: The homeless occupy 580 houses in Santo André, São Paulo, Brazil.
2000: Elsa M. Chaney (*1930) dies, outstanding American feminist with studies on women in Latin America.
New Moon: 01h24m (UTC) in Cancer



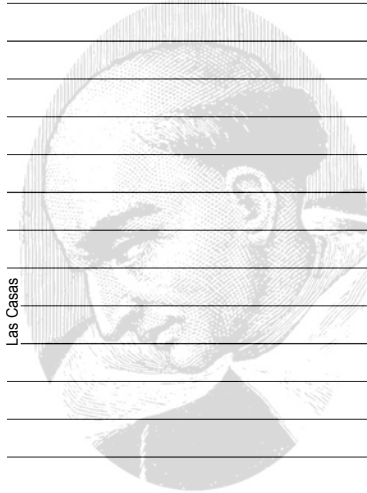
17 Friday

Ex 11,10-12,14 / Ps 115

Alejo, *Bartolomé de las Casas*
1566: Bartolomé de Las Casas dies at 82, prophet, defender of the cause of Indigenous peoples.
1898: U.S. troops seize Santiago, Cuba, during the Spanish American War.
1976: Sugar refinery workers martyred at Ledesma, Argentina.
1980: Bloody military coup in Bolivia led by Luis García Meza.

End of Ramadan

Las Casas



18 Saturday

Ex 12,37-42 / Ps 135

Arnulfo, Federico
1872: The great Indigenous Zapoteca, Benito Juárez, dies.
1976: Carlos de Dios Murias and Gabriel Longueville, priests, kidnapped and killed, martyrs to justice in La Rioja, Argentina.
1982: Over 250 campesinos from around the community of Plan de Sánchez are massacred by military as part of the Guatemalan government's scorched earth policy.
1992: Peruvian military death squad disappears professor Hugo Muñoz Sánchez and nine students from a university in Lima.

July

19

Sixteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Jer 23,1-6 / Sl 22

Eph 2,13-18 / Mk 6,30-34

Justa y Rufina, Arsenio

1824: Iturbide, emperor of Mexico, is executed by a firing squad.
1848: Father Marcelino Domeco Jarauta is shot in Guanajuato for his refusal to cease his resistance to the U.S. invaders after the peace accord giving away 40% of Mexican territory was signed.
1979: The Sandinista Revolution succeeds in overthrowing the Somoza dictatorship in Nicaragua.

20 Monday

Ex 14,5-18 / Ex 15,1-6

Elías
1500: A royal document orders the liberation of all Indigenous persons sold as slaves in the Peninsula. They are to be returned to The Indies.
1810: Independence of Colombia, National Holiday.
1848: Declaration at women's rights convention in Seneca Falls, New York demands women's legal equality with men and the right to vote.
1923: Doroteo Arango, «Pancho Villa», Mexican General and revolutionary, is assassinated.
1924: 200 Tobas and supporters demonstrating for a just wage are machine gunned at Napalpi, Argentina.
1969: In the person of Commander Neil Armstrong, a human being steps onto the moon for the first time.
1981: Massacre of Coya, Guatemala: three hundred women, elderly persons and children, are killed.

21 Tuesday

Ex 14,21-15,1 / Ex 15,8-17

Lawrence of Brindisi
1980: Wilson de Souza Pinheiro, trade unionist and peasant activist, assassinated in Brasília AC, Brazil.
1984: Sergio Alejandro Ortiz, seminarian, dies in Guatemala.
1987: Alejandro Labaca, Vicar of Aguarico, and Inés Arango, missionary, die in the Ecuadorian jungle.

22 Wednesday

Cant 3,1-4 / Ps 62

Jn 20,1.11-18
1980: Jorge Oscar Adur, priest and former president of JEC youth organization, is kidnapped by Argentine military.
2002: Bartolomeu Morais da Silva, organizer of land occupations by the poor, is tortured and killed in Brazil.

July



23 Thursday

Ex 19,1-2.9-11.16-20b / Dan 3,52-56

Bridget

Mt 13,10-17

1978: Mario Mujía Córdoba, «Guigui», worker, teacher, pastoral agent, martyr to the cause of workers in Guatemala.

1983: Pedro Angel Santos, catechist, is martyred in solidarity with the Salvadoran people.

1987: Over a hundred peasant supporters of land reform are massacred by a paramilitary force of landowners and junta in Jean-Rabel, Haiti.

1993: 8 street children are assassinated by a death squad while they sleep in the square in front of the church of the Candelaria in Río de Janeiro.

24 Friday

Ex 20,1-17 / Ps 18

Mt 13,18-23

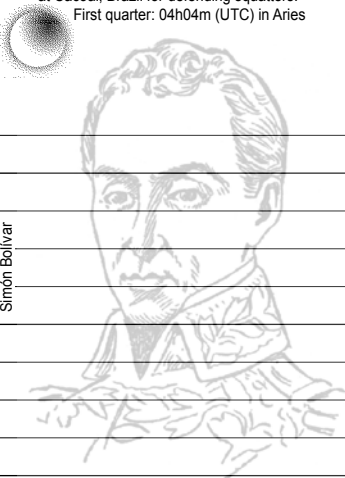
Cristina, Sharbel Makhluf

1783: Simon Bolivar is born in Caracas, Venezuela.

1985: Ezequiel Ramin, Colombian missionary, is martyred at Cacoal, Brazil for defending squatters.

First quarter: 04h04m (UTC) in Aries

Simón Bolívar



25 Saturday

Acts 4,33;5,12.27-33;12,2 / Ps 66

2Cor 4,7-15 / Mt 20,20-28

Saint James, Apostle

1898: The United States invades Puerto Rico.

1976: Wenceslao Pedernera, campesino pastoral leader, martyr in La Rioja, Argentina.

1980: José Othomaro Cáceres, seminarian and his 13 companions, martyrs El Salvador.

1981: Spaniard Angel Martínez and Canadian Raoul Légère, lay missionaries, are martyred in Guatemala.

1983: Luis Calderón and Luis Solarte, advocates for the homeless, are martyred at Popayán, Colombia.

1981: Angel Martínez Rodrigo y Raúl José Léger, catechists lay missionaries, Guatemala.

26

Seventeenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

2Kings 4,42-44 / Ps 144

Eph 4,1-6 / Jn 6,1-15

Joaquim and Ana

1503: The Cacique Quibian (Panamá) destroys the city of Santa María, founded by Columbus.

1847: Repatriated free black settlers from the USA declare Liberia's independence.

1927: First aerial bombardment in the history of the Continent, undertaken by the USA against Ocotál, Nicaragua, where Sandino had established himself.

1952: Eva Peron, charismatic leader and wife of Juan Peron, dies of cancer.

1953: Assault on the military camp of Moncada in Cuba.

27 Monday

Ex 32,15-24.30-34 / Ps 105

Celestine

Mt 13,31-35

1865: First settlers from Wales arrive in the Chubut Valley in southern Argentina.

1991: Eliseo Castellano, priest, dies in Puerto Rico.

28 Tuesday

Ex 33,7-11;34,5b-9.28 / Ps 102

Innocent, *John Sebastian Bach,*

Heinrich Schütz, George Frederic Handel

1821: Independence of Peru, National Holiday

1980: Seventy peasants massacred by the military in San Juan Cotzal, Guatemala.

1981: Stanley Rother, an American priest, is murdered in Santiago de Atitlán because of his dedication to the poor.

1986: International workers, Yvan Leyvraz (Swiss), Bernd Koberstein (German) and Joël Fieux (French) are assassinated by the Contras in Zompopera, Nicaragua.

29 Wednesday

1Jn 4,7-16 / Ps 33

Martha

Mary, Martha and Lazarus of Bethania, Olaf

Jn 11,19-27

July



30 Thursday
Ex 40.16-

Ex 40.16-21.34-38 / Ps 83

Peter Chrysólogus

1502: Columbus reaches Honduras.

1811: Miguel Hidalgo, priest and hero of the Mexican independence struggle, is executed.

1958: Frank Pais, student leader and opponent of the Batista dictatorship in Cuba, is shot by police.

31 Friday
Lev 23,1.4-11.15-1

Lev 23.1.4-11.15-16.27.34b-37 / Ps 80

Ignatius of Loyola

1981: Omar Torrijos, general and political leader who negotiated the return of sovereignty over the Canal Zone to Panama, dies in a suspicious plane crash.

2002: Pope John Paul II canonized Nahuatl peasant Juan Diego, to whom tradition says Mary, Mother of Jesus, appeared in Mexico.

Full Moon: 10h46m (UTC) in Aquarius



1 Saturday

Lev 25,1,8-17 / Ps 66

Alfonsus Ligouri

1917: Frank Little, a mine worker organizer, is tortured and murdered in Butte, Montana.

1920: Gandhi begins his civil disobedience campaign in India.
1975: Arlen Siu, 18 year old student, Christian activist, martyr
in the Nicaraguan revolution.

1979: Massacre at Chota, Peru.

August

2

Eighteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Ex 16.2-4.12-15 / Ps 77

Eph 4,17.20-24 / Jn 6,24-35

Eusebius Vercelli

1943: Prisoners at Nazi extermination camp of Treblinka in Poland revolt.

1981: Carlos Pérez Alonso, apostle of the sick and fighter for justice, disappeared in Guatemala.

HUMAN RIGHTS AND SPIRITUALITY

HEAVEN AND EARTH EMBRACE IN THE PRACTICE OF RIGHTS

MARCELO BARROS

Recife, PE, Brazil

Normally, the dominant society presents human rights exclusively as an area covering the inviolability of the individual and as liberal rights to travel, to buy and to consume. For many people, spirituality is still confused with spiritualism in the sense of something that goes beyond material things. That confusion, or reduction in the understanding of the concepts, both of Human Rights and of a real spirituality, is proper to the Western world.

The ancient civilizations of Asia, Oceania and Africa, as well as the native communities and the communities made up of those of African descent in the Americas, insist that rights are not only individual but also communitarian and collective. In addition, they always give priority to the rights of humanity as a whole. Nor do traditional communities and social organizations separate human rights from care of Mother Earth and all living things. These, in some way, become subjects of rights. This is part of a loving community that understands and practices spirituality as a way of living that is fully human and humanizing.

Contemporary society has a hegemonic, individual, secular and Western-centred idea of human rights that speaks of them in order to maintain and strengthen the capitalist, colonialist, sexist social (dis)order that dominates the world. In recent decades, it is primarily the Western empires that invoke the Declaration of Human Rights. Through their economic and military organisms they continue to violate the life of many people and of international justice, always in the shadow of human rights. In the name of democracy, of human rights and even Christian civilization, the government of the United States has invaded countries, assassinated people and destroyed cultures and human civilizations.

It is a duty of communities and social organizations to practice and to develop counter-hegemonic and alternative conceptions of human rights. Defense of human and cosmic rights is a social and political task. This implies effort, resources and commitment as well as an interior engagement - often at the risk even of one's own life, since the impoverished are not in

that situation because they are less capable but rather because they are exploited. Underlying the lack of respect and the violations against human rights there is a powerful, violent and dangerous social and political structure. To struggle against those forces requires not only ethical integrity and courage, but also an option of love in solidarity that comes from the deepest dimension of the personal and communitarian life project of those who believe and cast their lot for it.

For the struggle for rights and for eco-social justice to avoid becoming isolated, there has to be a cultural root anchored in the deepest dimension of being human. There, it is transformed into a permanent stance in the journey of people. This is an option that can be purely ethical, based on the conviction that all life has value in itself and deserves respect and care. That attitude of unconditional love and solidarity with humanity and with every human being is what could be called a "human and secular spirituality." It favours life in all its dimensions and gives rise to a different way of understanding human rights, both those formulated by the United Nations as well as those that emerge from the most profound traditions of cultures. Ken Wilber names as "integral vision" this existential process that leads us away from an egocentric stage to one that is ethnocentric and finally to a cosmocentric way of life. That path of loving co-existence based on cooperation and solidarity is the spiritual basis of the practice and defense of all human and cosmic rights.

Jesus asked of his disciples: "May your justice go beyond that of the teachers of the law and that of the Pharisees" (Matt 6). Cosmic spirituality leads us not only to defend human rights but also to embrace an ethical responsibility for those who are impoverished and marginalized by this cruel society. It is a matter of solidarity with the struggle of workers, native peoples, Blacks, oppressed women and all the different sorts of victims in a society that excludes. This solidarity requires organizing and has a social and political dimension. In some countries of Latin America, the new social and political process that is rising up from the grassroots is an expression of that revolutionary

Translation by Richard Renshaw

love that, throughout the Continent, is inspired by the liberator, Simon Bolivar, and for that reason deserves to be called Bolivarian.

Religious traditions have the mission of helping people deepen their grasp of the most profound dimension of life and the vocation of every person to love. Only in this way can being human recover its path toward the ultimate Mystery of the essence of all: the mystery that the majority of religions call God. The permanent risk is that, by having the goal of union with the divine, the various traditions hide the basic step - that of trying to live the divine - without taking stock of what can only be encountered in being human. Even though it is unique to Christianity to believe that God has been fully revealed in a human being (Christ), in reality all religions, in one way or another, are obliged to recognize that the divine can only be encountered in the human. What Irenaeus, pastor of the Church at Lyon, taught the Christians in the second century is valid for every person of every religion of all ages: "How can you become divine if you have not even managed to become human? Deepen your human condition and you will be able to participate in the divine glory."

That full humanization is only reached through effective and loving solidarity, principally with the most fragile and impoverished people. In the ancient world, Buddha began his path toward enlightenment motivated by compassion in solidarity with those living in misery whom he saw leaving his royal palace. Later, in the desert, the Prophet Mohammed received a message from an angel to bring together the tribes, who were suffering in his time. Judaism finds its beginnings in the Exodus when Moses felt called by God to free the oppressed Hebrews. And Jesus of Nazareth, to give witness to the project of God for the world, cured the sick, comforted the afflicted and revealed to the marginalized that "God is on their side."

The spiritual traditions of indigenous peoples and of those of African descent reveal these same ethical and spiritual roots by privileging a loving relationship with the Earth, the healing of illnesses and balance in life.

In 1993, in Chicago, the Second World Parliament of Religions promulgated the Declaration of a Global Ethic. There, delegates from extremely diverse religious traditions affirmed: "We condemn the abuses of Earth's ecosystems. We condemn the poverty that stifles life's

potential.... We condemn the social disarray of the nations; the disregard for justice which pushes citizens to the margin.... [T]he basis for an ethic already exists...." (It does not consist only in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and its complementary documents signed by international society. However, it has a concrete base there as a starting point.) "There already exist ancient guidelines for human behavior which are found in the teachings of the religions of the world and which are the condition for a sustainable world order."

The specific contribution of human spirituality - religious or not - to contra-hegemonic and liberating living and defending human and cosmic rights is to make of that path a method of intimacy with the Divine, present in the human, especially among those who suffer most and whose rights are least respected.

There are no recipes for how to follow this path. Still, we can pick out some of the means that are always useful as a pedagogical process:

1. Regard life and reality from the point of view of people and communities that suffer. Make the cause of the oppressed your own.

2. Don't substitute for them or direct them in the struggle. Support them so that they always keep their basic protagonism as agents in their own process.

3. Macro-ecumenical and cosmic spirituality demands that we value the cultures and religions of affected communities and individuals. These are languages of love that build up active resistance and nonviolent struggle for the defense of rights and justice.

4. Give priority always to sincere and ethical dialogue as the basic instrument of human relations and as the instrument for journeying.

5. Deepen the richness of religions not only in their expressions of cult but mainly in their ethical roots, which are capable of rendering fruitful the struggle of all humanity for a more just and fraternal world.

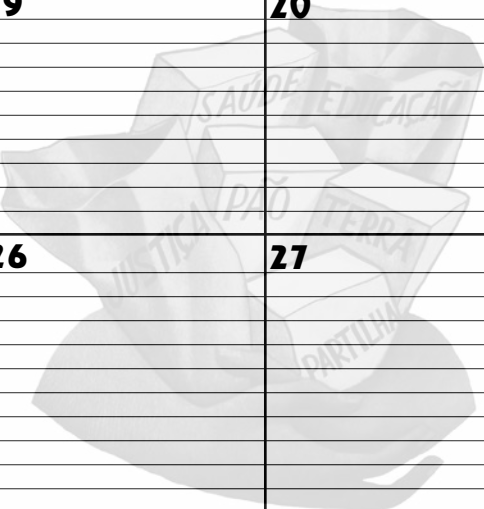
A Christian document of the Second Century said: "When you see your brother, any human being, you see God." One of the biblical prophets sums up the message, not only of the Bible but of all spiritual traditions, when he pronounces as the divine word: "God has told you what is good; and what is it that the Lord asks of you? Only to act justly, to love loyalty, to walk wisely before your God." (Micah 6:8).

2015

July

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13	14	15	16	17	18	19							

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday
28 Lunes	28 Martes	29 Miercoles	30 Jueves
3	4	5	6
10	11	12	13
17	18	19	20
24	25	26	27
31			



<div> <div>Friday</div> <div>Saturday</div> <div>Sunday</div> </div>			<div> <div>AUGUST</div> </div>		
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3 Monday

Num 11,4b-15 / Ps 80

Lydia
1492: Columbus sets sail from Palos de la Frontera on his first visit to the Western Indies.
1960: Niger gains its independence from France.
1980: Massacre of miners in Caracoles, Bolivia, following a State coup: 500 dead.
1999: Ti Jan, a priest committed to the cause of the poor, assassinated in Puerto Príncipe, Haiti.

4 Tuesday

Num 12,1-13 / Ps 50

Mt 14,22-36

John Vianney
1849: Anita Garibaldi, Brazilian heroine and fighter for liberty in Brazil, Uruguay and Italy, dies in a retreat from Rome.
1976: **Enrique Angelelli**, bishop of La Rioja, Argentina, prophet and martyr to the poor. 38 years after the fact, the justice system confirms that his death was an assassination.
1979: Alirio Napoleón Macías, Salvadoran priest, is machine-gunned while celebrating Mass.
2006: Julio Simón is condemned as a State terrorist: the first case following the abrogation of the laws of "Full Stop" and "Due Obedience" in Argentina.

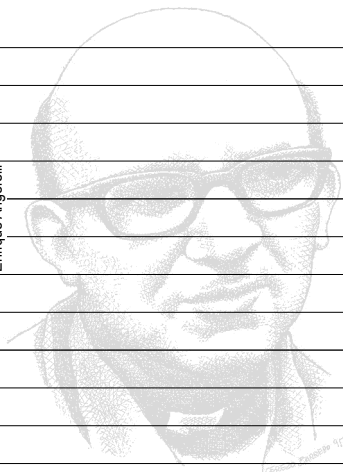
5 Wednesday

Num 13,1-2,25;14,1,26-30,34-35 / Ps 105

Mt 15,21-28

1499: Alonso de Ojeda arrives at La Guajira, Colombia.
1940 : Unemployment insurance begins (Canada).
2000: Carmen Sánchez Coronel, a teacher's union representative, and six others are murdered at a military barracks in Sardinata, Colombia.

Enrique Angelelli



6

Thursday

Dan 7,9-10,13-14 / Ps 96

Transfiguration

2Pet 1,16-19 / Mt 17,1-9

1325: Founding of Tenochtitlan (Mexico, DF).

1538: Founding of Santa Fe de Bogotá, Colombia.

1524: Battle of Junín.

1825: Independence of Bolivia, National Holiday.

1945: The United States drops an atomic bomb on the civilian population of Hiroshima, Japan.

1961: Kennedy creates the Alliance for Progress.

1962: Independence of Jamaica, National Holiday.

2000: Argentinean Jorge Olivera is arrested in Italy and charged with the disappearance of a young French woman during the Argentinean military dictatorship.

7

Friday

Deut 4,32-40 / Sl 76

Mt 16,24-28

Sixtus and Cayetan

1819: With the victory of Boyacá, Bolívar opens the way to the Liberation of Nueva Granada (Colombia).

1985: Christopher Williams, evangelical pastor, is martyred for faith and solidarity in El Salvador.

2002: In continuing repression of Zapatista communities in Chiapas, Mexico, José López Santiz, is assassinated in front of his two small sons.

Last Moon: 02h02m (UTC) in Taurus



8

Saturday

Deut 6,4-13 / Ps 17

Mt 17,14-20

Dominic of Guzman

1873: Birth of Emiliano Zapata, campesino leader of the Mexican Revolution. His call for land reform inspired other social struggles globally.

1994: Manuel Cepeda Vargas, a Unión Patriótica senator, is assassinated in on-going civil strife in Bogotá, Colombia.

1997: General strike in Argentina, 90% participation.

2000: The Supreme Court of Chile removes parliamentary immunity from ex-dictator Pinochet.

9

Nineteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

1Kings 19,4-8 / Ps 33

Eph 4,30-5,2 / Jn 6,41-51

Fabio, Román

1945: The U.S.A. drops an atomic bomb on Nagasaki.

1984: Eduardo Alfredo Pimentel, Christian activist for human rights and against the Argentinean dictatorship.

1989: Daniel Espitia Madera, Colombian campesinos leader, assassinated.

1991: Miguel Tomaszek and Zbigniew Strzalkowski, Franciscan missionaries in Peru, murdered by Sendero Luminoso.

1995: Military police kill ten landless workers and brutally arrest 192 others in Corumbiara, Rondônia, Brazil.

2007: The French BNP Paribas bank blocks three investment funds: the world economic crisis befalls.

UN Indigenous Peoples' Day

10 Monday

Deut 10,12-22 / Ps 147

Lawrence

1809: First cry for independence in continental Latin America, that of Ecuador, National Holiday.

1960 : Canadian Charter of Rights passed

1974: Tito de Alencar, a Dominican priest, commits suicide as a result of being tortured in Brazil.

1977: Jesús Alberto Pérez Vargas, leader of the communal land movement, kidnapped and disappeared, Peru.

2000: Union leader, Rubén Darío Guerrero Cuentas, kidnapped, tortured and murdered by paramilitaries in Guacamayal, Colombia.

11 Tuesday

Deut 31,1-8 / Deut 31,1-8

Mt 18,1-5.10.12-14

Clare of Assisi

1898: U.S. forces occupy Mayagüez, Puerto Rico during the Spanish-American War.

1972: Last U.S. ground combat force pulled from South Vietnam.

1992: The march of 3,000 landless peoples begins in Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil.

1997: The "Asian Crisis" begins and affects finances throughout the world.

12 Wednesday

Deut 34,1-12 / Ps 65

Mt 18,15-20

Julian

1546: Francisco de Vitoria dies in Salamanca, Spain.

1952: On orders from Joseph Stalin, 13 of the most prominent Jewish writers in the Soviet Union are murdered.

1972: After a failed escape attempt, 16 political prisoners from Rawson, Argentina are executed at the Argentine naval base at Trelew.

1976: 17 Latin American bishops, 36 priests, religious and laity are arrested by the police in Riobamba, Ecuador.

1981: IBM launches the marketing of personal Computers, a revolution in human life.

1983: Margarita Maria Alves, president of the Rural Union of Alagoa Grande, Brazil, martyr to the earth.

UN International Youth Day

August



13 Thursday

Josh 3,7-10a.11.13-17 / Ps 113A

Polycarp, Hippolyto

Mt 18,21-19,1

1926: Fidel Castro is born near Mayari, Cuba.

1961: Construction of the Berlin wall began.

1999: Colombian journalist and political satirist, Jaime Garzón Forero, is murdered by right-wing paramilitaries.

2014: Maria Lucia do Nascimento, trade union activist, murdered in União do Sul, MT, Brasil.

14 Friday

Josh 24,1-13 / Ps 135

Mt 19,3-12 Assumption

Maximilian Kolbe

1816: Francisco de Miranda, Venezuelan Father of the Nation, precursor of independence, dies in prison.

1984: Campesinos martyred at Aucayacu, Ayacucho, Peru.

1985: Campesino martyrs of Accomarca, department of Ayacucho, Peru.

2000: Robert Canarte, union activist, is found dead after being kidnapped two weeks earlier by paramilitaries in Galicia, Colombia.

New Moon: 14h53m (UTC) in Leo

15 Saturday

Apoc 11,19a;12,1.3-6a.10ab / Ps 44

1Cor 15,20-27a / Lk 1,39-56

1914: The Panama Canal formally opens. An estimated 27,500 workmen died during French and American construction efforts.

1980: José Francisco dos Santos, president of the Union of Rural Workers in Corrientes (PB), Brazil, is assassinated.

1984: Luis Rosales, union leader, and companions seeking justice for Costa Rican banana workers are martyred.

1989: María Rumalda Camey, catechist and representative of GAM, captured and disappeared in front of her husband and children, Escuintla, Guatemala.



16

Twentieth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Prov 9,1-6 / Ps 33

Eph 5,15-20 / Jn 6,51-58

Rock, Stephen of Hungary

1819: Calvary charge into peaceful crowd advocating for parliamentary reform leaves 11 dead and hundreds injured in Manchester, England.

1976: Coco Erbetta, catechist, university student, martyr to the struggles of the Argentinean people.

1993: Indigenous Yanomani martyrs in Roraima, Brazil.

2005: Roger Schutz, founder of the ecumenical Taizé movement, is assassinated.

2006: Alfredo Stroessner, Paraguayan dictator accused of crimes against humanity, dies in Brasilia.

2014: Josias Paulino de Castro and Ireni da Silva Castro, rural leaders, murdered in Colniza, MT, Brasil

17 Monday

Judg 2,11-19 / Ps 105

Mt 19,16-22 Helen

Jacinto
1850: José San Martín, Argentine general and key independence leader, dies.
1962: Berlin Wall claims its first victim as 18 year old Peter Fechter is shot attempting to cross it.
1997: The Landless Peoples' Movement (MST) occupies two haciendas in Pontal do Paranapanema, SP, Brazil.

18 Tuesday

Judg 6,11-24a / Ps 84

Mt 19,23-30 John Eudes

1527: Cacique Lempira is assassinated during a peace conference (Honduras).
1952: Alberto Hurtado SJ, Chile's apostle to the poor, dies. He is canonized in 2005.
1989: Luis Carlos Galán, a Colombian presidential candidate, is assassinated by drug cartel hit men in Bogotá.
1993: Indigenous Ashaninkas martyrs, Tziriri, Peru.
2000: Two military police in Rondonia are judged guilty of the massacre of Corumbiara against the landless, Brazil.

19 Wednesday

Judg 9,6-15 / Ps 20

Mt 20,1-16

1936: Federico García Lorca, poet and dramatist, murdered by Spanish fascists.
1953: CIA assisted coup overthrows the government of Iran and reinstates the Shah who then awards 40% of Iran's oilfields to U.S. corporations.
1991: Attempted State coup in the USSR.

August



20 Thursday

Judg 11,29-39a / Ps 39
Bernard
1778: Birth of the Father of the Chilean Nation, Bernardo O'Higgins.
1940: Exiled Russian revolutionary, Leon Trotsky, is assassinated by a Stalinist agent in Mexico City.
1982: América Fernanda Perdomo, a Salvadorian human rights activist, kidnapped along with 5 others including a child.
1998: The U.S.A. bombards Afghanistan and Sudan.

21 Friday

Ruth 1,1.3-6.14b-16.22 / Ps 145
Pius X
1680: Pueblo Indians revolt and drive the Spanish from Santa Fe, New Mexico.
1971: Maurice Lefevre, Canadian missionary, is assassinated in Bolivia.

22 Saturday

Ruth 2,1-3.8-11;4,13-17 / Ps 127
Mt 23,1-12
Queenship of Mary
1988: Jürg Weis, Swiss theologian and evangelical missionary, is martyred in the cause of solidarity with the Salvadoran people.
2000: Henry Ordóñez and Leonardo Betancourt Mendez, Colombian teacher, union leaders, are assassinated.
First Moon: 19h31m (UTC) in Scorpio



23

Twenty-first Sunday in Ordinary Time
Josh 24,1-2a.15-17.18b / Ps 33
Eph 5,21-32 / Jn 6,60-69
Rose of Lima
1821: Spain signs the Treaty of Cordoba granting Mexico independence as a constitutional monarchy.
1833: Slavery Abolition Act passed abolishing slavery in the British colonies.
1948: Founding of the World Council of Churches..
1975: The National Institute of Indigenous People is created in Paraguay.

International Day of Remembrance of the Victims of Slavery and its Abolition

24 Monday

Apoc 21,9b-14 / Ps 144

Bartholomew

Jn 1,45-51

1572: King of France orders massacre of Huguenots.

1617: Rosa of Lima, patroness and first canonized saint in America.

1977: First Congress of Black Cultures of the Americas

1980: 17 union leaders, meeting on the farm of the Bishop Escuintla, Guatemala, are disappeared.

25 Tuesday

1Thess 2,1-8 / Ps 138

Joseph of Calasanctius,

Louis of France

1825: Independence of Uruguay, National Holiday.

1991: Alessandro Dordi Negroni, missionary promoting human dignity, is martyred for his faith, in Peru.

2000: Sergio Uribe Zuluaga, member of the Teacher's Union of Antioquia (FECODE), is killed by paramilitaries in Medellin, Colombia.

2009: The Attorney General of the United States decides to investigate cases of possible torture by the CIA during the Bush government.

26 Wednesday

1Thess 2,9-13 / Ps 138

Teresa Jornet

Mt 23,27-32

1968: The Conference of Medellin opens.

1977: Felipe de Jesus Chacón, peasant catechist, is assassinated by the military in El Salvador.

2000: Luis Mesa, a member of the university professor's union (ASPU), is murdered in Barranquilla, Colombia.

August



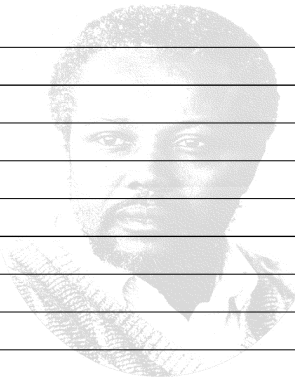
27 Thursday

1Thess 3,7-13 / Ps 89
 Monica
 Mt 24,42-51
 1828: Independence of Uruguay.
 1847: The English Superintendent and the Miskito King announce the abolition of slavery in the Atlantic Coast of Nicaragua.
 1928: Kellogg-Briand Pact signed by sixty nations "providing for the renunciation of war as an instrument of national policy."
 1987: Héctor Abad Gómez, medical doctor, martyr to the defense of human rights in Medellín, Colombia.
 1993: Law 70/93 recognizes the territorial, ethnic, economic and social Rights of the Black communities of Colombia.
 1999: Hélder Câmara, bishop, brother of the poor, prophet of peace and hope, dies in Brazil.

28 Friday

Agustine
 1Thess 4,1-8 / Ps 96
 Mt 25,1-13
 1963: Martin Luther King, Jr. gives his famous *I have a dream* speech before 200,000 at a civil rights rally in Washington, D.C..
 1994: **Jean-Marie Vincent**, Montfortian priest and co-operative organizer, assassinated in Puerto Principe, Haiti.

Jean-Marie Vincent



29 Saturday

Jer 1,17-19 / Ps 70
 Mk 6,17-29
 Martyrdom of John the Baptist
 1533: Baptism and execution of Inca Atahualpa by Spanish conquistadors in Peru.
 1563: The Royal Tribunal of Quito is created.
 1986: In spite of the prohibition of the Cardinal of Rio de Janeiro, the Third Meeting of Black Religious and Priests takes place in that city.
 2000: Insurance worker's union leader, Moises Sanjuan, is assassinated by forces believed linked to Colombian military in Cucuta.



Full Moon: 18h35m (UTC) in Pisces

30

Twenty-second Sunday Ordinary Time
 Deut 4,1-2.6-8 / Ps 14
 Jas 1,17-18.21b-22.27 / Mk 7,1-8.14-15.21-23

Félix, Esteban Zudaire
 1985: 300 FBI agents invade Puerto Rico and arrest more than a dozen activists struggling for independence.
 1993: A death squad and police execute 21 people in the Rio de Janeiro slum of "do Vigário Geral" in Brazil.
 1999: East Timor votes for independence in a UN supervised referendum.

International Day of the Disappeared
 (Amnesty International and FEDEFAM)

CLIMATE CHANGE AND HUMAN RIGHTS

IVO POLETTO

Goiânia, GO, Brazil

1. Rights of the Land, necessary for Human Rights

To speak adequately with a critical conscience these days we must keep in mind the relationship between Human Rights and the rights of the Earth, also called nature's rights. To affirm that individuals and communities have a right to a favorable climate it is absolutely necessary that we guarantee that the Earth has the right to what she created, an environment favorable to life.

Just about every nation's constitution affirms the rights of individuals and communities. This includes the right to a good environment as well as the public responsibility to care for it. However, it is limited by its anthropocentric formulation. That is why these constitutions maintain an ideological illusion that it is possible to guarantee the human right and care of the natural environment while at the same time promoting the constant expansion of free-enterprise corporations. At their base is the private appropriation of the natural wealth found on and below the ground, and their transformation through industrial processes and the appropriation of human labor and the techniques of production. In recent years, these companies have demanded the absolute liberty on the global level to consolidate a market of capital and goods which are very stressful to the Earth. The results of this process are the dismantling of the *social welfare state*, an increase in unemployment, the exploitation of workers, and a ever-growing concentration of global wealth.

With the collaboration of the indigenous peoples, who have decided to bring to the space of political democracy the communitarian practice of *Living Well*, Bolivia and Ecuador have taken an innovative step in the recognition of the rights of the Earth. In Ecuador's constitution, these rights are found in the seventh chapter: "Nature, or Pacha Mama, in what concerns life, has the right that its existence be respected in its totality along with the maintenance and regeneration of its vital cycles, structures, functions and evolutionary processes. In other words, Pacha Mama had its *vital cycles before* human be-

ings did; in fact, human life was only made possible through evolutionary processes, which generated the biodiversity made possible life's jump to the human form. Therefore, without the recognition and the guarantee of Pacha Mama's rights, the conditions for the human right to a living environment and indeed, for all human rights would disappear.

2. Agressions which provoke climate change

So profound has been human interference in the vital structures of the Earth, some investigators are working on the hypothesis that the geological era known as the Holocene is being replaced by the Anthropocene. This indicates that human activity continues to bring about the end of a period of eleven million years in which the earth's climate was in equilibrium and favorable to the multiplication of living species, including the human, which now surpasses seven billion people.

According to investigators working in collaboration with the IPCC—Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change—, along with the confirmation of other centres of investigation, the process of climate change began around 1750, with the so-called capitalist *industrial revolution*. Four factors were and continue to be essential: a) the successive discoveries of more efficient sources of energy: coal, gas, petroleum...; b) the development of new technologies and machinery, accelerating the extraction of primary materials and the production and commercialization of these products; c) the internationalization of the capitalist market, especially with the hegemony of financial capital, in the epoch of neo-liberal globalization; d) the ideological generation of consumers' needs through the communications media, and control over the useful life of products, planning their obsolescence, expanding consumerism and waste.

To sum up, thanks to the capitalists who command everything, humanity is reaching the point where the quantity of CO₂ in the atmosphere has passed the 400 parts per million (ppm). That is a lot when we consider that in the last seven million

Translation by Ernie Schibli

years of the *holocene* era, the CO₂ in the atmosphere was held at 280 ppm, which, in turn, kept the earth's temperature at an average of 14.5 degrees Celsius. Now, with 400 ppm, the average temperature of the planet is practically one degree higher. It is clear and proven that we are in *a process of the warming of the Earth*.

This planetary warming, combined with other processes of pollution and contamination, is the principal cause of climatic change. Phenomena like rains, winds, blizzards, maritime storms, droughts... are changing in intensity and are becoming life-threatening. More frequent, larger and longer droughts, as well as more intense hurricanes and rising sea levels are making uninhabitable areas in densely populated continents. Where will the millions of *climate migrants* live?

3. The necessary fight for environmental justice.

Who suffers more intensely the effects of climate change, the 85 multimillionaires who hold the same patrimony as 3.5 billion human beings? Those who are the principal causes of the processes of global warming... or the 3.5 billion forced to share among themselves what is left over from the collective generation of wealth?

This is the paradox: those who promote and maintain the global expansion of the "civilization of Petrol" and the "civilization of consumerism" and who are the major causes of global warming, suffer less from climate change than the billions of impoverished people who have almost nothing. The most affected are the persons, families, communities and peoples who live in territories much afflicted by modern colonialism (as initiated in the XVI century, and especially brought about in the XIX century to despoil Africa and parts of Asia of their natural riches), and by the unequal neoliberal relationships of global commerce.

Impoverished people have the right to compensation for ecological debt, and they have the right to demand that those who are causing global warming assume their responsibilities: that they agree to implement deep changes in all that brings about the disequilibria in our planet, and that they help the people affected to face the problems created by

global warming. As everyone knows, if these changes were to depend on the good will of those who have caused global warming, they would do nothing; on the contrary they would gather more money to promote disinformation campaigns on the approaching tragedy, presenting themselves as innocent promoters of 'progress'. The fight for ecological justice *must be assumed by the affected communities* by constructing in their territories a way of living compatible with the health of the Earth, and pushing through the global changes needed by all life forms.

4. Human Rights and the Earth in times of climatic change.

Hunger, which still causes the early death of millions of people, especially children and older folk, can neither be considered as the result of fate nor a lack of initiative on the part of the poor. Rather, it has been shown to be the result of the same process of concentrated capitalist economic growth, by the way the companies, who control the supplies of cereals and other materials through the stock markets and financial speculation. Each rise in the prices of grain due to speculation represents a death decree through hunger for those who do not have the 'dollar power' to buy what they need.

In this way, *hunger is a crime against human rights* just like modern slavery and as such has to be abolished. The culprits should be brought before the courts, judged, condemned and forced to abandon their criminal practices. We have already identified those who cause global warming, resulting in deaths, forced displacements and the destruction of the Earth's equilibrium. These actions should be judged as crimes against human rights and the rights of Earth and the perpetrators also should be judged, condemned and forced to abandon these criminal practices.

It is indeed urgent that more and more peoples and countries recognize in their republican constitutions the rights of nature, of Pacha Mama, of the Earth. The struggle for human rights, affected by the same process of the neoliberal capitalist globalization that damages our natural environment, *must always be linked with the struggle for the rights of the Earth*.



2015

August

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L	M	X	J	V	S	D
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31						

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31 Monday

1Thess 4,13-18 / Ps 95

Raymond Nonatu
 1925: The U.S. Marines end 10 years of occupation of Haiti.
 1962: Independence of Trinidad and Tobago.
 1988: **Leónidas Proaño**, bishop to the Indigenous peoples, dies in Ríobamba, Ecuador.
 2002: Adolfo de Jesús Munera López, former Coca-Cola worker, murdered by paramilitaries in Barranquilla, Colombia.

1 Tuesday

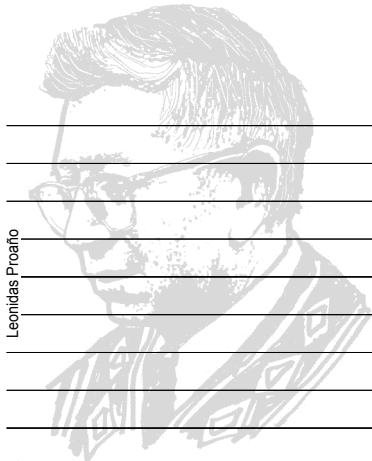
1Thess 5,1-6.9-11 / Ps 26

Night of the ascension of Mohammed: moved from Mecca to Jerusalem.
 1971: Julio Spósito Vitali, Christian Uruguayan activist, martyr to the people's struggles, assassinated by the police.
 1976: Inés Adriana Coblo, Methodist, activist, martyr to the cause of the poor, Buenos Aires.
 1978: The Black Conscience Union group emerges, followed by that of Black Pastoral Workers.
 1979: Jesús Jiménez, campesino and Delegate of the Word, is martyred in El Salvador.
 2000: Hernando Cuartas, a union activist at a Nestle's plant, is assassinated in Dosquebradas Risaralda, Colombia.
 2011: Reinel Restrepo, parish priest of Marmato (Caldas, Colombia), opposition leader to the mega-exploitations of the mining industry, assassinated..

2 Wednesday

Col 1,1-8 / Ps 51

Antolin, Elpidio
 1885: White miners massacre 28 Chinese co-workers at Rock Spring, Wyoming.
 2000: Gil Bernardo Olachica, a teacher's union member (FECODE) is killed by paramilitaries in Barrancabermeja, Colombia.



Leónidas Proaño

3 Thursday

Col 1,9-14 / Ps 97

Lk 5,1-11

Gregory the Great

1759: Jesuits are expelled by Lisbon from their Brazilian colony for the "usurpation of the state of Brazil".

1971: Bernardino Díaz Ochoa, a campesino union organizer, is murdered in Matagalpa, Nicaragua by Somoza forces.

1976: Death of Ramón Pastor Bogarín, bishop, founder of the University of Asunción, prophet in the Church of Paraguay.

4 Friday

Col 1,15-20 / Ps 99

Lk 5,33-39

Rosalía, *Albert Schweitzer*

1970: Electoral victory of the Unidad Popular, Chile.

1977: Death of Ernest Schumacher, economic thinker whose book, *Small is Beautiful*, influenced a generation of environmentalists and community activists.

1984: Andrés Jarián, French priest, shot by police while reading the Bible in La Victoria, Santiago, Chile.

1995: World Conference on Women, Beijing.

2005: Judge Urso sends Jorge Videla to prison along with 17 other oppressors in the military dictatorship in Argentina.

5 Saturday

Col 1,21-23 / Ps 53

Lk 6,1-5

Lawrence and Justinian

1877: Tasunka witko or Crazy Horse, Lakota leader committed to preserving traditions and values of his people, is killed in Nebraska.

1960: Ajax Delgado, Nicaraguan student leader, is assassinated.

1983: The unemployed hold a sit-in in the Legislative Assembly in São Paulo.

Last Moon: 09h54m (UTC) in Gemini



6

Twenty-third Sunday Ordinary Time

Isa 35,4-7a / Ps 145

Jas 2,1-5 / Mk 7,31-37

Juan de Ribera, Zacarías

1522: Juan Sebastian Elcano, Magellan's second in command, completes first circumnavigation of the globe with one of the original five ships and eighteen other survivors.

1860: Jane Addams, social reformer and first woman to receive the Nobel Peace Prize, is born.

1990: Fred Upshaw, first Black leader of a major union (Canada).

1995: 2,300 landless people occupy the Boqueirão hacienda, Brazil. They will be expelled.

7

Monday

Col 1,24-2,3 / Ps 61

Lk 6,6-11

Regina

1822: "Cry of Ipiranga" marks the independence of Brazil from Portugal, National holiday.

1968: The Medellin Conference ends.

1981: Inaugural national assembly of the Black Consciousness Union.

1992: South African troops fire on African National Congress demonstrators.

8

Tuesday

Mic 5,1-4a / Ps 12

Mt 1,1-16.18-23

Nativity of Mary

1522: Magellan's ship, the Juan Sebastián Elcano, completes the first trip round the World.

1941: The Nazi siege of Leningrad begins. A million civilian and Red Army defenders die.

1943: Julius Fučík, Czechoslovakian resistance leader, tortured and executed by the Nazis.

1974: Ford offers Nixon a "full and absolute pardon for all the crimes he might have committed when he occupied the Presidency."

International Literacy Day

9

Wednesday

Col 3,1-11 / Ps 144

Lk 6,20-26

Peter Claver

1654: Pedro Claver, apostle to black slaves, dies in Cartagena, Colombia.

1613: Uprising of Lari Qaxa, Bolivia (Aymaras and Quichuas confront the Spanish).

1990: Hildegard Feldman, a nun, and Ramon Rojas, a catechist are martyred for their service to Colombian peasants.

September



10 Thursday Col

Col 3,12-17 / Ps 150

Nicholas of Tolentino

Lk 6,27-38

1897: Sheriff's deputies open fire on unarmed immigrant miners at a peaceful demonstration near Hazleton, Pennsylvania. More than 19 die.

1924: U.S. Marines occupy various cities in Honduras to support the presidential candidate.

1984: Policarpo Chem, catechist and co-operative leader, kidnapped and tortured by government forces in Vera-paz, Guatemala.

11 Friday
1Tim

1Tim 1,1-2.12-14 / Ps 15

Lk 6,39-42

Proto y Jacinto

1973: State coup in Chile against President Allende.

1981: Sebastiana Mendoza, Indigenous catechist, martyr to solidarity, Guatemala.

1988: Martyrs of the Church of San Juan Bosco, in Puerto Príncipe, Haiti.

1990: Myrna Mack, anthropologist and human rights advocate, is assassinated in Guatemala.

2001: Attack on the Twin Towers, New York.

2008: Massacre of farmers in El Porvenir, Pando, Bolivia, to the orders of industrialists and landowners, with the knowledge of the Prefect Leopoldo Fernandez, today in prison.

12 Saturday 1Tim

1Tim 1,15-17 / Ps 112

Lk 6,43-49

2 Leoncio y Guido

1977: Steve Biko, Black Consciousness Movement leader, is martyred in South Africa.

1982: Alfonso Acevedo, catechist, martyr in his service to the internally displaced persons in El Salvador.

1989: Valdicio Barbosa dos Santos, head of rural worker's union, shot at Pedro Canário, Brazil.

2001: Barbara Lee, California congresswoman, votes against granting Bush the power to invade Afghanistan.

13

Twenty-fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Isa 50,5-9a / Ps 114

Jas 2,14-18 / Mk 8,27-35

John Chrysostom

1549: Juan de Betanzos retracts his earlier opinion that Indigenous people are not human.

1589: Bloody rebellion of the Mapuches, Chile.

1973: Georges Klein, Arsenio Poupin and 19 others persons are shot by soldiers two days after being captured during the coup, in the Presidential Palace (La Moneda) in Santiago, Chile.

1978: The U.N. reaffirms the right of Puerto Rico to independence and free self-determination.

1980: Adolfo Pérez Esquivel, an Argentinean architect and human rights advocate, jailed and tortured by the military, receives the Nobel Peace Prize.

Partial eclipse of the sun, visible in Africa and Asia

New Moon: 06h41m (UTC) in Virgo



14 Monday

Num 21,4b-9 or Phil 2,6-11 / Ps 77

Exaltation of the Cross
1843: Birth of Lola Rodríguez, author of the insurreccional hymn, «la Borinqueña», in the Sept. 23, 1868 insurrection against Spanish rule in Puerto Rico.
1847: Under U.S. General Winfield Scott, military take control of Mexico City.
1856: Battle of San Jacinto, defeat of the filibusters of William Walker in Nicaragua.
1920: Birth of Mario Benedetti, Uruguayan author, poet, and activist, writer of exile.
1992: The First Assembly of the People of God (APD) opens. The term «macro-ecumenism» is coined.

15 Tuesday

Heb 5,7-9 / Ps 30

Our Lady of the Seven Sorrows
1810: The «Cry of Pain» in Mexico.
1821: Independence of Central America, National Holiday in all the countries of Central America.
1842: Francisco de Morazán, Central American labor leader, is executed by a firing squad in San José, Costa Rica.
1973: Arturo Hillerns, medical doctor, martyr in his service to the poor of Chile.
1973: Victor Jara, Chilean folk singer, and political activist, tortured and shot by military in Santiago, Chile.
1981: Pedro Pío Cortés, Indigenous Achí, celebrator of the Word, Baja Verapaz, Guatemala, martyr.

Jewish New Year: 5776

16 Wednesday

1Tim 3,14-16 / Ps 110

Cornelius and Cyprian
1501: The king authorizes the governor of the Caribbean islands to import African slaves.
1821: Mexican independence, National Holiday.
1931: Founding of the "Frente Negro Brasileño" in São Paulo. It will later be closed down by Getúlio Vargas.
1955: Civic-military insurrection that deposes Constitutional President Peron, Argentina.
1983: Guadalupe Carney, north-american jesuit, is assassinated in Honduras, by the Honduran army.

World Ozone Day (U.N.)

17 Thursday

1Tm 4,12-16 / Ps 110

Robert Bellarmine

Lk 7,36-50

1981: John David Troyer, a Mennonite missionary, martyred for justice in Guatemala.

1983: Carlos Alirio and Fabián Buitrago, Giraldo Ramirez and Marcos Marin, campesinos, catechists, are assassinated at Cocomá, Colombia.

1983: Julián Bac, Delegate of the Word, and Guadalupe Lara, catechist, martyrs in Guatemala.

18 Friday

1Tim 6,2c-12 / Ps 48

Joseph of Cupertino

Dag Hammarskjöld

1810: Independence of Chile, National holiday.

1969: The «Rosariozo»: Citizens force the police to retreat, in Rosario, Argentina.

1973: Miguel Woodward Iriberry, a priest from Valparaíso, Chile, is assassinated by the Pinochet dictatorship.

1998: Miguel Angel Quiroga, a priest, is murdered at a paramilitary base in Chocó, Colombia.

19 Saturday

1Tim 6,13-16 / Ps 99

Januarius

Lk 8,4-15

1973: Juan Alsina, Omar Venturelli, and Etienne Pesle, priests, victims of the Pinochet police.

1983: Independence of Saint Kitts and Nevis.

1985: Earthquake in Mexico City.

1986: Charlot Jacqueline and companions, martyrs of liberating education, Haiti.

1994: The United States lands in Haiti to return Jean Bertrand Aristide.

2001: Yolanda Cerón, Director of Pastoral Ministry for the Diocese of Tumaco, Colombia, assassinated.

20

Twenty-fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Wis 2,12,17-20 / Ps 53

Jas 3,16-4,3 / Mk 9,30-37

Andrew Kim, Fausta

1519: Hernando de Magallanes sets sail for Sanlúcar.

1976: In Washington, Orlando Letellier, the former Chancellor of the popular regime of Allende, is assassinated.

1977: The Indigenous peoples of Latin America raise their voices for the first time in the Palace of the Nations in Geneva.

1978: Francisco Luis Espinosa, priest, and companions are martyred at Estelí, Nicaragua.

1979: Apolinar Serrano, José Lopez, Félix García Grande and Patricia Puertas, campesino labor leaders, are martyred in El Salvador.

21 Monday

Eph 4,1-7.11-13 / Ps 18

Matthew

- 1956: Dictator Anastasio Somoza dies at the hands of Rigoberto López Pérez, Nicaragua.
1904: Chief Joseph, Nez Perce humanitarian and resistance leader, dies in exile in Washington state.
1973: Gerardo Poblete Fernández, Salesian priest, assassinated in Iquique, Chile by the Pinochet regime.
1981: Independence of Belize.

International Peace Day (U.N.)

First Moon: 08h59m (UTC) in Sagittarius



22 Tuesday

Eza 6,7-8.12b.14-20 / Ps 121

Maurice

- 1977: Eugenio Lyra Silva, lawyer, martyred for justice in Santa Maria da Vitoria, Brazil.
1862: Slaves in the United States are legally freed.
2000: Omar Noguera, member of the municipal employees union in Cali, Colombia, dies of wounds received in attacks targeting trade unionists.

23 Wednesday

Eza 9,5-9 / Tob 13,2-8

Lino y Tecla

- 1850: José Artigas, a national hero of Uruguayan independence, dies in exile.
1868: «Cry of Lares»: Ramón Betances begins the emancipation movement from slavery in Puerto Rico.
1905: Francisco de Paula Victor dies; considered a saint by the Brazilian Afro-American community.
1973: Pablo Neruda dies.
1989: Henry Bello Ovalle, activist, martyred for his solidarity with Colombia's youth.
1993: Sergio Rodríguez, worker and university employee, martyr to the struggle for justice, Venezuela.
2008: "Day of the Overshoot": we start spending 30% more resources than are available on the planet.

Yom Kippur Jewish

Islamic feast of Sacrifice, Eid al-Adha

Equinox, autumn/spring at 10h21m (UTC)

September



24 Thursday

Hag 1,1-8 / Ps 149

Peter Nolasco

Lk 9,7-9

1533: Caupolicán, leader of the Mapuche, executed by Spanish conquistadors.

1810: The Bishop of Michoacán excommunicates Miguel Hidalgo, pastor of Dolores, for calling for Independence.

1976: Marlene Kegler, student, martyr of faith and service among university students of La Plata, Argentina.

1976: Independence of Trinidad and Tobago.

25 Friday

Hag 2,15b-2,9 / Ps 42

Lk 9,18-22

Cleofás

Sergio de Radonezh

1513: Vasco Núñez de Balboa crosses the Isthmus of Panama and reaches the Pacific Ocean.

1849: Lucas da Feira, fugitive slave and chief of the resisting Sertanejos of Brazil, is hanged.

1963: Pro-USA military coup in the Dominican Republic. Bosh, an admirer of the Cuban revolution, is deposed.

26 Saturday

Zech 2,5-9.14-15a / Jer 31,10-13

Lk 9,43b-45

Cosmos and Damian

1944: Brazilian troops wrest control from the Nazis of the Serchio valley on the central front of the Gothic Line in Italy after 10 days of fighting.

1974: Lázario Condo and Cristóbal Pajuña, Christian leaders of their communities fight for agrarian reform, are assassinated in Riobamba, Ecuador.

27

Twenty-sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Num 11,25-29 / Ps 18

Jas 5,1-6 / Mk 9,38-43.45.47-48

Vincent de Paul

Day of Enriquillo, Quisqueyano Indigenous, who resisted the Spanish conquest in the Dominican Republic.

1979: Guido León dos Santos, a hero of the working class, is a victim of political repression in Minas Gerais, Brazil.

1990: Sister Agustina Rivas, Good Shepherd Religious, martyr in La Florida, Peru.

2002: Mexican military court charges three army officers with the killings of 143 people during the "dirty war" of the 1970's.

Bible Day, in some countries of America

CATTLE AND HUNGER IN CONSUMER SOCIETY

VÂNIA MÁRCIA DAMASCENO NOGUEIRA

Brasília DF, Brazil

It is recognized that in consumer society animals are considered objects for the use of humans. Although technological advancements have created mechanisms so that humans do not have to rely upon animal products to survive, to protect themselves from the cold or as food, nevertheless animals and socially marginalized human beings are the ones that suffer from this "progress".

The more economically developed a country becomes, the more mentally backward it slides in relation to protection of environmentally sensitive beings, and the greater becomes its disregard for the environment of neighboring countries, especially because of its moral egotism in thinking that environmental damage is halted at border barriers or is limited to affecting only the actual polluter.

Pigs defecate 7-8 times more often than humans. Despite being environmentally highly polluting, extensive pig raising in cruel fattening conditions is still big business in many developing countries, even though it has already been banned in some developed countries to prevent pollution within its borders, as in Denmark and Northern Germany. They prefer importing from a country that breeds pigs. They think that the dirt will be confined to the producing countries, always forgetting that "rivers flow into the sea".

Ought progress improve life-quality for all living beings, or only for some living beings? Would it be progress if humans would live with greater liberty, but simply take a step to perpetuate animal slavery and a modern mechanism of human self-enslavement?

It's quite obvious that progress is by no means democratic. The egocentric material satisfaction that for some goes far beyond measure, apart from not benefiting everybody, actually is prejudicial to that part of society which lacks economic means to keep up with the new technology, and barely manages to maintain itself as part of the productive process, and often even as only part of the product itself. It is that vulnerable part of society that gets excluded from both knowledge and consuming. Nevertheless it is just that same part that harbors moral consideration

for its animals and is culturally obliged to raise them in order to sustain the farm market and a small portion of the financially fortunate members of society – those who eat meat and are great contributors to the degradation of our planet.

Every hour 1,800 children die from malnutrition or hunger; 15 million per year. In 2002, the United Nations released a report foreseeing that by the year 2025 about 4,000 million people -- half of the expected global population -- will face water scarcity. Who will be the first to suffer the impact of this shortage? Of course, it will be those same ones who today suffer the impact of food shortage.

De-forestation for extensive cattle raising ("beef on the hoof") is the principal destroyer of the Amazons. It also helps increase the greenhouse effect through "bovine flatulence", destroys forests and compacts the soil, just as Chico Mendes said over 15 years ago. Moreover, one of the greatest ongoing preoccupations is the amount of water involved in producing a single kilo of meat and the influence of extensive cattle raising on the increased human-hunger on the planet.

In the year 2004 the FAO established that 15,000 liters of water are necessary to produce one kilo of meat, whereas 1,300 liters of fresh water are utilized to produce one kilo of cereal. Today there are more cattle in the world than human beings, and Brazil has the largest herds. There are countries that are unable to sustain production of animals for food because of the lack of water. So they leave cattle raising to developing countries from whom they then simply import with the idea that its environmental damage will never reach their borders.

Every day humans are eating more meat in the world. Henry Salt, in "Animal Rights", highlights this primary issue of food in the debate over animal rights. Food is still the principle human use for animals. The great majority of animals are killed for food production. According to Gary Francione of the FAO, United Nations Agriculture and Food Organization, human beings butcher approximately 53 billion animals

Translation by Justiniano Liebl

per year for food, and this does not include fish and other marine animals. Treating animals as food is the great philosophical and ethical dilemma of the present century.

The more cattle on the planet, the greater competition for space to raise grain for marginal human beings who do not eat meat. There are areas that could be farmed to feed human beings instead of being used to raise food for livestock. Presently 30% of the earth's land is being used to raise food for beef, and 33% of the land for cattle raising itself. Only the more affluent human population eats meat. Raising cattle is helping to reduce the food-raising space for impoverished humans. The meat produced by agribusiness feeds a scarce 20% of the planet's humanity -- just that part which never goes hungry. Animals raised by humans for food consume more protein than the amount of protein they provide to humans as food.

The purpose of this information is not to make a case against eating meat, but rather to alert and question us regarding its excessive consumption since the media are constantly spreading an exaggerated consumerism. Our industrial culture induces unnecessary consumption, targeting our human foibles, influencing our ego and promising to fill our contemporary existential void. It constantly offers promises of beauty, glamour, happiness, pleasure and power -- all through a tremendous variety of products, new brands, colors and models that are being launched at every moment. Most of these products are superfluous, and are usually manufactured through great suffering to other living beings: brand handbags, colorful leather shoes, soft skin, miracle creams, delicious meat sandwiches etc.--, and all are offered for consumption as if they were essential for humans.

We know that we are eating the same hormones that have been injected into the animals, and that excessive consumption of red meat causes much human illness such as cancer and cardiac diseases, besides allergic and respiratory ailments. It should be mandatory for everybody before going to the butcher shop to consider the importance of the moral implications once we have recognized the magnitude of the suffering and sacrifice that is hidden behind extensive animal husbandry.

It is still a widely used resource in consumer society to consider animals as objects primarily for

food, although progress has already shown that it is not necessary for that use: nor do humans still need to hunt to procure skins to be protected from the cold now that cotton is common. Peter Singer makes the case that the public ignorance concerning animal suffering for the production process favors the over-consumption of meat and that the market law of supply and demand would regulate the production of vegetable products for better prices and greater varieties if the population were more familiar with the depth of suffering involved.

Marina Silva, former Brazilian Minister of the Environment, stated that it is sad to realize that children are replacing "playing" with "consuming". This leads to serious consequences for them and for the environment, since paradoxically, the young ones are those who have proved to be most sensitive about nature.

This analysis has been necessary in order to introduce a new paradigm or model of life, under pressure from our current socio-economic system presented as necessarily subjugating humans and animals, which at this moment is ushering mankind into a unprecedented ecological crisis.

Contact and coexistence with animals is extremely healthy for humans since it stimulates love and responsibility for the environment, and is pedagogically impressive for children, teaching them the need of self-care, sociability and self-esteem, helping them to see people as living beings, not as mere objects. To see them in any other way is cruel and destructive of the natural living condition: destructive of both the animal and the human being itself.

Note:

Every German consumes an average of 1,094 animals per year: 4 cows, 4 sheep, 12 geese, 37 ducks, 46 pigs, 46 turkeys and 945 chickens. An 85% of the population eats meat almost daily from breakfast on. Meat consumption has quadrupled since the nineteenth century. With an average consumption of 60 kilos of meat per person per year, the Germans eat twice as much as does the population of developing countries. In the poorest countries, the average annual meat consumption is about 10 kilos per capita. [www.dw.de/atlas-de-la-carne-desequilibrios-a-nivel-mundial/a-16512688].

2015

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28 Monday

Zech 8,1-8 / Ps 101

Wenceslaus and Lawrence Ruiz
551 B.C.E.: Birth of Confucius in China.
1569: Casiodoro de Reina delivers his translation of the Bible to the printer.
1868: Attempt by ex-slaves to defend a white supporter results in a massacre of up to 300 blacks at Opelousas, Louisiana.
1871: Brazilian law of the "Free Belly" separates Black infants from their slave parents: the first "abandoned minors."
1885: Brazilian law of the "Sixty year-old," throws Blacks over 60 into the street.
1990: Pedro Martinez and Jorge Euceda, activist journalists, are martyred for the truth in El Salvador.

Jewish feast of Sukkot

Total Eclipse of the Moon

Full Moon: 02h50m (UTC) in Aries



29 Tuesday

Dan 7,9-10.13-14 / Ps 137

Michael, Gabriel, Raphael
1871: The Benedictines are the first religious order in Brazil to free their slaves.
1941: Babi Yar massacre results the death of at least 33,771 Jews from Kiev and its suburbs at the hands of the Nazis.
1906: Second US armed intervention in Cuba. It will continue for 2 years, 4 months.
1992: Congress deposes President Collor, Brazil.

30 Wednesday

Neh 2,1-8 / Ps 136

Jerome
1655: Coronilla and companions, Indigenous caciques, martyrs to liberation, Argentina.
1974: Chilean General Carlos Prats and his wife, witnesses for democracy, are assassinated in Argentina at the beginning of Operation Condor.
1981: Vincente Matute and Francisco Guevara, peasants, murdered in the struggle for their land in Yoro, Honduras.
1981: Honorio Alejandro Núñez, Celebrator of the Word and seminarian, martyr to the Honduran people.
1991: José Luis Cerrón, university student, martyr to solidarity, Huancayo, Peru.
1991: State coup against Constitutional President Jean-Bertrand Aristide, Haiti.
1991: State coup against the constitutional government of Jean-Bertrand Aristide, Haiti.



1 Thursday

Neh 8,1-4a.5-6.7b-12 / Ps 18

Therese of the Child Jesus

Lk 10,1-12

1949: Victory of the Chinese Revolution, China's National Day.

1542: The war of Araucania begins.

1991: The military expel the constitutional president of Haiti,

Aristide, and begin a massacre.

1992: Julio Rocca, Italian volunteer, is martyred in Peru in the cause of solidarity.

International Day of Elderly Persons

2 Friday

Guardian Angels

1869: Mahatma Gandhi is born.

1968: Tlatelolco Massacre sees the Mexican army massacre hundreds of students peacefully protesting in the Plaza of the Three Cultures in Mexico City.

1972: Beginning of the invasion of the Brunka territory in Honduras by the United Brand Company.

1989: Jesus Emilio Jaramillo, bishop of Arauca, Colombia, martyred for peace in service of the people.

1992: Police repression of the prisoners at Carandín, São Paulo: 111 dead and 110 wounded.

International Day for Non-violence (UN)

Bar 1,15-22 / Ps 78

Lk 10,13-16

3 Saturday

Bar 4,5-12.27-29 / Ps 68

Lk 10,17-24

Francis Borgia

1838: Black Hawk, leader and warrior of the Sauk tribe dies after a life of resistance to encroachment of the United States on Indigenous lands.

1980: Maria Magdalena Enriquez, Baptist and press secretary of the Human Rights Commission of El Salvador, is martyred for her defense of the poor.

1990: Reunification of Germany.



Twenty-seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time

Gen 2,18-24 / Ps 127

Heb 2,9-11 / Mk 10,2-16

Francis of Assisi, *Theodore Fliedner*

1226: Death of Francis of Assisi, patron saint of Catholic Action and the environment.

1555: The provincial council of Mexico forbids priesthood to Indigenous people.

1976: Omar Venturrelli is martyred for his work among the poor in Temuco, Chile.

2007: The widow and five sons of Pinochet go to prison for appropriation of public funds.

Last quarter: 23h06m (UTC) in Cancer



5 Monday

Jon 1,1-2,1.11 / Jon 2,3-8

Plácido y Mauro

1984: Illegal U.S. aid to Nicaraguan Contras confirmed when

Nicaraguan government shots down a cargo plane and captures a survivor.

1995: The Guatemalan army massacres 11 peasants from the "Aurora 8th of October" community to discourage the return of refugees who had fled to Mexico.

World Teachers' Day

World day of yhe homeless (October first Monday)

6 Tuesday

Jon 3,1-10 / Ps 129

Lk 10,38-42

Bruno

William Tyndal

1976: Over 300 peacefully protesting students are massacred by a coalition of right-wing paramilitary and government forces in Bangkok, Thailand.

1981: Assassination of Anwar al-Sadat, Nobel Peace Prize recipient and President of Egypt.

7 Wednesday

Jon 4,1-11 / Ps 85

Lk 11,1-4

Rosario, *Henry Melchor, Muhlenberg*

Our Lady of Rosary, patroness of blacks, Brasil.

1462: Pius II officially censures the reduction of Africans to slavery.

1931: * Desmond Tutu, South African Archbishop, and Nobel Peace Prize recipient.

1973: An army lieutenant and a group of police massacre 15 persons at Loquén, Chile.

1980: José Osán Rodríguez, peasant Delegate of the Word, is martyred in Honduras.

1980: Manuel Antonio Reyes, pastor, martyr of dedication to the poor, in El Salvador.

1998: Matthew Shephard tortured, tied to a fence, and left to die in Laramie, Wyoming because of his sexual orientation.

2001: The USA begins the invasion of Afghanistan.



8 Thursday

Mic 3,13-20a / Ps 1

Tais y Pelagia

Lk 11,5-13

1970: Néstor Paz Zamora, seminarian and son of a Bolivian general, is martyred in the struggle for the liberation.

1974: The first Amerindian parliament of the Southern Cone meets in Asunción.

1989: Penny Lernoux, journalist, author and defender of the poor in Latin America, dies.

1990: Police fire leaves 17 Palestinians dead and over 100 wounded on the Temple Mount in Jerusalem.

9 Friday

Joel 1,13-15;2,1-2 / Ps 9

Lk 11,15-26

Dionisio, Luis Beltrán

1581: Death of Luis Beltrán, Spanish missionary in Colombia, Dominican, preacher, canonized in 1671, principal patron of Colombia since 1690.

1967: Ernesto Che Guevara, Argentine physician and Cuban revolutionary, is executed in Bolivia.

10 Saturday

Joel 4,12-21 / Ps 96

Lk 11,27-28

Tomás de Villanueva

1868: The Grito de Yara proclaims Cuba's independence at Carlos Céspedes plantation at La Demajagua.

1987: First Encounter of Blacks of South and Southeast Brazil, in Rio de Janeiro.

1970: Pierre Laporte, the Vice-Prime Minister and Minister of Labor of Quebec is kidnapped by the FLQ.

2007: Life imprisonment for Christian Von Wernich, chaplain to torturers Argentina.



11

Twenty-eighth Sunday in Ordinary

Wis 7,7-11 / Ps 89

Heb 4,12-13 / Mk 10,17-30

Soledad Torres Acosta

1531: Ulrich Zwingli dies in Switzerland.

1629: Luis de Bolaños, Franciscan, precursor of the reductions, apostle to the Guaraní.

1810: Francisco Javier Lizana, Archbishop of Mexico, confirms the excommunication against Hidalgo and his followers for calling for the independence of Mexico.

1976: Marta Gonzalez de Baronetto and companions are martyred for their service to the people of Córdoba, Argentina.

1983: Benito Hernández and indigenous companions are martyred in the struggle for land, in Hidalgo, Mexico.

12 Monday

Rom 1,1-7 / Ps 97
Lk 11,29-32

Pilar, Serafin

Cry of the excluded in various countries of L.A.

1492: At 2 AM, Columbus sees the Guanahani Island, which he will call San Salvador (today, Watling).

1909: The pedagogue, Francesco Ferrer I Guardia faces a firing squad in Barcelona.

1925: 600 US Marines land in Panama.

1958: First contact with the Ayoreos Indigenous people, Paraguay.

1976: Juan Bosco Penido Burnier, a Jesuit missionary, is martyred for his charity in Ribeirão Bonito, Brazil.

1983: Marco Antonio Orozco, an Evangelical pastor, is martyred in the cause of the poor in Guatemala.

13 Tuesday

Edward

1629: Dutch West Indies Co. granted religious freedom to residents of its West Indian territories.

1987: 106 landless families occupy farmlands in various parts of Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil.

1996: Josué Giraldo Cardona, a human rights activist, is killed by Colombian paramilitaries.

New Moon: 00h05m (UTC) in Libra

14 Wednesday

Calixtus

1964: Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. becomes the youngest recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize for his non-violent resistance to racism in the U.S.A.

1973: 77 university students demanding a democratic government in Thailand are killed and hundreds wounded.

Islamic New Year: 1437

International Day for Natural Disaster Reduction
Second Wednesday of October

15 Thursday

Rom 3,21-30a / Ps 129

Teresa of Avila

Lk 11,47-54

1535: Pedro de Mendoza moves up the Río de la Plata with 12 ships and 15,000 men.

1880: Vitorio, Apache resistance leader, is killed by Mexican troops.

1994: Aristide takes power again in Haiti after the interruption of a military coup led by Raoul Cedras.

2008: General Sergio Arellano Stark, head of the Caravan of Death, is sent to prison 35 years later, Chile.

16 Friday

Margaret Mary Alacoque

1975: Greg Shackleton and four other journalists are killed at Balibo by Indonesian troops invading East Timor.

1992: Guatemalan Rigoberta Menchú, advocate of indigenous rights, receives the Nobel Peace Prize.

1997: Fulgêncio Manoel da Silva, labor leader and politician is assassinated in Santa Maria da Boa Vista, Brazil.

1998: Pinochet is arrested in London. More than 3,100 persons were tortured, disappeared and/or assassinated during his 17-year dictatorship.

2008: Garzón opens the first case against the Franco regime.

World Food Day (FAO, 1979)

17 Saturday

Rom 4,13.16-18 / Ps 104

Lk 12,8-12

Ignatius of Antioch

1806: Jean-Jacques Dessalines, revolutionary leader and a founding father of Haiti, is assassinated.

1961: Over a hundred unarmed Algerian Muslim demonstrators are killed by Paris police and special troops.

2003: Gonzalo Sánchez de Lozada, President of Bolivia, is defeated by a popular uprising.

International Day for the Eradication of Poverty

18

Twenty-ninth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Isa 53,10-11 / Ps 32

Heb 4,14-16 / Mk 10,35-45

Luke

1859: Anti-slave uprising in Kansas, USA.

1570: Death of Manuel da Nóbrega, Jesuit missionary and defender of the Indigenous peoples of Brazil.

1977: Over 100 workers at Aztra sugar mill in Ecuador are massacred when they demand payment of back wages.

1991: "Torture, Never Again" identifies 3 victims secretly buried in São Paulo.

19 Monday

Rom 4,20-25 / Lk 1,69-75
Lk 12,13-21

Peter of Alcantara
Paul of the Cross

1983: Maurice Bishop, ousted Prime Minister of Grenada, is executed along with Vincent Noel and key New Jewel Movement leaders.

2001: Digna Ochoa, human rights lawyer, is assassinated in Mexico City.

20 Tuesday

Rom 5,12.15b.17-19.20b-21 / Ps 39
Lk 12,35-38

Laura

1548: Founding of the city of La Paz.

1883: End of the border war between Chile and Peru.

1944: Ubico, dictator, is thrown out in Guatemala by a popular insurrection.

1975: Raymond Hermann, an American priest serving the Quechua of Bolivia, is martyred.

1978: Oliverio Castañeda de Leon, student leader and symbol of the struggle for liberty in Guatemala, is killed.

First quarter: 20h31m (UTC) in Capricorn



21 Wednesday

Rom 6,12-18 / Ps 123
Lk 12,39-48

Ursula, Celina, Viator

1971: Chilean Pablo Neruda is awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature.

1973: Gerardo Poblete, Salesian priest and a martyr for peace and justice in Chile, is tortured, then murdered.



22 Thursday

Rom 6,19-23 / Ps 1

Lk 12,49-53

María Salomé

1976: Ernesto Lahourcade, Argentine trade unionist, is martyred for justice.

1981: Eduardo Capiáu, Belgian Religious, martyr to solidarity in Guatemala.

1987: Nevardo Fernández is martyred in the struggle for indigenous rights in Colombia.

2009: Víctor Gálvez, catechist, human rights promoter, is assassinated for his resistance to transnational mining and electrical companies. Malacatán, San Marcos, Guatemala.

23 Friday

Rom 7,18-25a / Ps 118

Lk 12,54-59

Juan Capistrano

Santiago de Jerusalén

1956: Hungarian uprising against Soviet rule begins with peaceful demonstrations.

1986: Vilmar José de Castro, pastoral worker and land rights activist is assassinated in Caçú, Goiás, Brazil, by the UDR of the landowners.

1987: Joao "Ventinha", a peasant farmer, is killed by three gunmen at Jacundá, Brazil.

24 Saturday

Rom 8,1-11 / Ps 23

Lk 13,1-9

Anthony Mary Claret

1945: The United Nations is founded.

1977: Juan Caballero, Puerto Rican union leader, is assassinated by a death squad.

2005: Rosa Parks "Mother of the Modern-Day Civil Rights Movement" dies in Detroit, Michigan.

World Development Information Day

United Nations Day

Aniversary of the Signing of the U.N. Charter, 1945.

Disarmament Week (ONU), Oct. 24-30.

25

Thirtieth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Jer 31,7-9 / Ps 125

Heb 5,1-6 / Mk 10,46-52

Crisanto, Gaudencio

1887: A sector of the Brazilian Army, in solidarity with the people, refuses to destroy the Black stockades.

1974: Antonio Llidó, Spanish priest, disappeared, Chile.

1975: Vladimir Herzog, journalist, assassinated by the military dictatorship in São Paulo.

1983: The US invades Granada.

1987: Carlos Pérez y Salvador Ninco, Indigenous; Luz Estela and Nevardo Fernandez, workers, Colombia.

1988: Alejandro Rey and Jacinto Quiroga, pastoral workers, martyrs to the faith, Colombia.

2002: Death of Richard Shaull, Presbyterian liberation theologian and missionary in Brazil and Colombia.

26 Monday

Rom 8,12-17 / Ps 67
Lk 13,10-17

Felícísimo, Evaristo

Felipe Nicolai, Johann Heemann, Paul Gerhard

1981: Ramón Valladares, Salvadoran human rights activist, is assassinated.

1987: Hubert Luis Guillard, a Belgian priest is assassinated by an army patrol in Cali, Colombia.

1987: Herbert Anaya, Sawyer, martyr to Human Rights, El Salvador.

27 Tuesday

Rom 8,18-25 / Ps 125
Lk 13,18-21

Gustavo

1553: Miguel Servet, Spanish theologian, physician, and humanist, condemned by Catholics and Protestants alike, is burnt at the stake in Geneva.

1561: Lope de Aguirre, brutal Spanish conquistador, murdered by own men after, in Venezuela.

1866: Peace of the Black Hills between the US Army and the Cheyenne, Sioux and Navajo peoples.

1979: Independence of St. Vincent and the Grenadines, National Holiday.

2011: Sentence over the mega cause ESMA, major torture and death centre in Argentina. Life sentence for Alfredo Astiz, "angel of death" and 15 other.

Full Moon: 12h05m (UTC) in Taurus



28 Wednesday

Eph 2,19-22 / Ps 18
Lk 6,12-19

Simon and Jude

Procession of the Black Lord of the Miracles (Christ) in Lima, according to an Afro-Peruvian tradition.

1492: Columbus arrives in Cuba on his first voyage..

1962: Soviet leader Khrushchev and U.S. president Kennedy agree on a way to end the Cuban Missile Crisis.

1907: Birth of Sergio Méndez Arceo, Bishop of Cuernavaca, Mexico and social activist.

1986: Mauricio Maraglio, missionary, martyr to the struggle for land, Brazil.



29

Rom 8,31b-39 / Ps 108

Narcissus

1626: The Dutch buy the island of Manhattan from the Indigenous people for 24 dollars.

1987: Manuel Chin Sooj and companions, Guatemalan peasant catechists, are martyred.

1989: 14 fishermen in El Amparo, Venezuela are shot by a military and police force.

30

Rom 8,31b-39 / Ps 108
Lk 13,31-35 Alonso Rodríguez

1950: Nationalist insurrection in Puerto Rico, directed by Pedro Albizu Campos.

1979: Santo Dias da Silva, 37 year-old metal worker and Christian labor activist, is martyred for Brazilian workers.

1983: Raúl Alfonsín is elected president in Argentina after the military dictatorship.

1987: Nicaragua approves a multi-ethnic Caribbean autonomous region, the first in Latin America.

1999: Dorcelina de Oliveria Folador, a physically handicapped activist with the landless movement is assassinated for her denunciation of the powerful in Brazil.

Rom 9,1-5 / Ps 147

Lk 14,1-6 Reformation Day

1553: Alonso Illescas founds the first Latin American black community not to have experienced slavery at Esmeraldas, Ecuador.

1973: José Matías Nanco, Evangelical pastor and his companions, martyrs to solidarity, Chile.

1989: Members of the National Federation of Salvadoran Workers Unions (FENASTRAS) are martyred in San Salvador. El Salvador.

World Savings Day

31 Saturday

Rom 11,1-2a,11-12,25-29 / Ps 93

Lk 14,1.7-11

November

1

All Saints

Apoc 7,2-4.9-14 / Ps 23

1Jn 3,1-3 / Mt 5,1-12a

1974: Florinda Soriano, "Doña Tingó", leader of the Federation of Christian Agrarian Leagues, martyred for the people of the Dominican Republic.

1979: All Saints Massacre at La Paz, Bolivia.

1981: Independence of Antigua and Barbados.

2004: The Chilean Army accepts responsibility for crimes during the dictatorship of Pinochet.

THE RIGHT TO MIGRATE

MY TESTIMONY

YOLANDA CHÁVEZ

Los Angeles, California, USA

One of my son's most recent social studies assignments at his Elementary school was to make a map explaining the first human migrations. He drew red arrows to indicate the routes that those migrants made to different continents. "They migrated because their supplies were exhausted due to the sudden change of weather. It began to get very cold; they could not hunt or gather berries because of this climate. However, if they stayed in Africa, they would have died." This was an extracted from my son's essay to show that the first migration was caused by hunger, and a natural survival instinct made our ancestors leave their well-known territories more than 50,000 years ago and venture into the unknown. The possibility to find food gave them the courage and the right to do so.

This is the same reason I had to leave my country. Our resources at home had been exhausted from my siblings and me because of the murder of my father. There is a disease that is caused by living too long immersed in the injustice of a society of murder, where no wages are proportional to the work done, where they cut you down before you ever rise above, It's called desperation. My mother contracted it, became seriously ill, lost all her will, faith, and strength to go on; she no longer wanted to live.

A modest grant for providing my services as teacher in remote communities was no longer enough to support my studies and family. However, I survived until I could finish a professional career. At that time I learned to feel close to God. It happened in a humble classroom of literacy for adults in which I gathered together every afternoon with farmers who wanted to learn to read and write after their working days and my classes with children. I felt it in the names written for the first time by their owner, and the joy they felt to be able to assert their own identity: "I am Fermín," "I am Teresa," "I am Felipe". I felt it in the way we celebrated (when someone was able to write their name for

the first time, they would lift their paper up holding it with both hands and the rest of the class would applaud and run to hug them) despite the fact that these communities found themselves in extreme poverty, they still lived with hope, which exceeded my common sense.

In that humble classroom, farmers learned to read and write, and I learned how to talk to God. My prayers consisted of asking for signs of what I had to do in order to bring food to my siblings, because in my country having a profession meant nothing. A series of doors that wouldn't open signaled my way north. I took the path on foot, leaving my land behind, the land where I met God, but also the land where my father had died along with all my possibilities.

Where does the force come from that grabs us by the arm and pushes us to venture beyond our land? Where do we get the faith that fills our hearts enough for us to dare to cross valleys of death? From where did that morning come from where the pain contorted my face and ran my tears dry at the sight of my own dying flesh and my own dying blood, in the death of the stranger that failed to reach the border like me?

Im sure it was God! When boundaries are crossed, God meets us, enables us to push through, he's in the form of our feet, in the structure of our hands, in the will to live. He gives us the strength to want a better future, and the fundamental right to fight for life. He's in unknown territory where we face the most painful lack of solidarity, what you need when the dignity all people deserve is undermined, when a group of "Eleven million" is labeled and excluded rights. A group treated as objects, and with which the governments of different territories treats as a mass that needs to be ejected, and the places that they migrate to, don't know what to do with.

They are not a mass, they are people with a history of life, with genuine faith in the future. People

Translation by Ditter and Asís, children of the author

with faces that are invisible to those with power and whom God questions: “where is your brother” (Gn 4,9). When is the best time to answer him? Close to the elections, or after them?...

Today I continue speaking with God in the classroom, now as a teacher to catechists. In these classrooms there are people who form parts of families that have been separated by the raids of immigration, they have lived through the deportation of family members arrested while they worked, or they've lost them in detention centers. In these classrooms there also lives the joy of confirming one's own identity with questions as fundamental as: Who am I? The joy of discovering one's self, no longer exceeds my common sense; now I understand it.

It happens in one grand moment. In our circumstances we feel the warm embrace of our ancient mother: Nantzin, Tonantzin-Guadalupe, Mother, our mom... that hug unites us as sons and daughters. She raises us against her cheek, she awakes us from our long lethargy with fear and doubts to illuminate our existence with great certainty: we are the blessed sons and daughters, her youngest. She is the reality in which all our lives have been supported. Our mother makes us family. Unity that is liberty, hope, profound experience; we meet face to face with our maternal and tender God who cares, protects and consoles the weak and defenseless. “Does a woman forget her nursing child, without compassion for the one in her womb?” (Is 49, 15). We immigrants reflect the endearing child. This certainty gives us dignity, and strength to face adversity and to head towards the future. By natural instinct we begin to look for love, care, justice, and peace, characteristics all belonging to God, and from our conditions his presence manifests. His tenderness drives us, it moves us to be sons and


daughters with solidarity, working to relate with our brothers and sisters in compassionate, just, and worthy ways.

From this, the necessity to reject what is incompatible with the human family is born, to question those mediums of communication that exploit the pain of homes that were ripped apart by deportations, to comments of news anchors such as: “immigrants marched today through the streets insisting for representation of their rights...wait a minute, they have no rights, what rights?” Every person deserves rights, simply being human gives us rights.

The universal declaration of human rights (art. 2) confirms that these rights apply to all people, “without distinction of any kind, such as race, color, sex, language, religion, opinion (political or otherwise), social or national origin, property, place of birth, or any other status.”

I know how to these “eleven million”, God signaled a path to the first migrations of about 50,000 years ago so they could survive. We humans continue to migrate because it's in our genes. We fight for life to the last breath.

I ask our mother to help me discover the means, the words, and the ways to call the conciseness of my brothers and sisters who have drawn, with their steps, lines of red arrows over continents, so they won't get accustomed to abuse. Abusing or being abused, is not right. Let that be understood once and for all. It isn't moral that in the seas, hills, and deserts of our shared home, there appear cadavers of immigrant women, men, and children every day and no one does anything. Migration is a right. Those who pursue, corral, or provoke death to immigrants, also do it to God.

God himself represents foreign people's cause: *Do not mistreat or oppress strangers, for you and your people were strangers in Egypt* (Ex 23, 9). 

This is the moment in history in which the most amount of people live outside their country of origin. In 1990 there were 154 million of emigrants; in 2000, 174; in 2010, 220; in 2013, 232. Those migrating from the south that live in other countries in the south equal the amount that reside in the north. According to the study Shattered Families from the Applied Research Center (ARC), in 2011 there were 5,100 children that were in custody of the state in detention or for the deportation of their parents to the USA to Mexico. In 2012 deportations affected 142,426 children. According to the ARC, if this trend continues in the next five years, at least another 15,000 children will face these threats.

2015

October

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2

Monday

Job 19,1-23-27a / Ps 24

All Souls

Fhil 3,20-21 / Mk 15,33-39;16,1-6

1965: Norman Morrison, a Quaker, self-immolated in front of the Pentagon to protest United States involvement in Vietnam.

1989: Rape and torture of Sister Diana Ortiz provokes allegations of U.S. complicity in the Guatemalan civil war.

3

Tuesday

Rom 12,5-16a / Ps 130

Lk 14,15-24

Martín de Porres

1639: Death of Saint Martin de Porres in Lima, Peru. Son of a Black slave, overcoming prejudice was accepted as a Religious by the Dominicans.

1903: Panama separates from Colombia with the support of the US, National Holiday.

1979: Sandi Smith, a nurse and civil rights activist, and four companions are shot down at an anti-Ku Klux Klan rally in Greensboro, North Carolina.

1991: Fifteen people are killed in the Barrios Altos neighborhood of Lima, Peru when a military death squad mistakenly attacks a barbeque party.

Last Moon: 12h24m (UTC) in Leo



4

Wednesday

Rom 13,8-10 / Ps 111

Lk 14,25-33

Charles Borromeo

1763: The Ottawa (USA) go to battle against the Detroit.

1780: Rebellion against the Spanish led by Tupac Amaru, Peru.

1969: Carlos Mariguela is executed, São Paulo.

1984: Nicaraguans participate in the first free elections in 56 years. Daniel Ortega wins the presidency.

1995: Anti-peace accords extremist assassinates Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin.

5

Thursday

Rom 14,7-12 / Ps 26

Lk 15,1-10

Zacharias and Elizabeth

1838: Independence of Honduras.

1811: First battle fought in El Salvador's war of independence from Spain.

1975: Agustín Tosco, Argentine labor leader, dies when unable to seek medical attention due to political repression.

1980: Fanny Abanto, teacher, leader among educators, animator of BECs in Lima, witness to the faith.

1988: Araceli Romo Álvarez and Pablo Vergara Toledo, Christian activists, martyrs in the resistance against dictatorship in Chile.

6

Friday

Rom 15,14-21 / Ps 97

Lk 16,1-8

Leonard

1844: Spain grants independence to the Dominican Republic.

1866: Imperial Decree 3275 frees those slaves throughout Brazil who are prepared to defend the country in the war against Paraguay.

1988: José Ecelino Forero, pastoral agent, is martyred for faith and service in Colombia.

International Day for Preventing the Exploitation of the Environment in War and Armed Conflict (UN).

7

Saturday

Rom 16,3-9.16.22-27 / Ps 144

Lk 16,9-15

Ernest

John Christian Frederik Heyer

1513: Ponce de Leon takes possession of Florida.

1917: Victory of the worker-campesino insurrection in Russia. The first experience of constructing socialism in the world begins.

1837: Elijah Lovejoy, an American abolitionist and journalist, killed by a pro-slavery mob intent on destroying his printing press in Alton, Illinois.

1978: Antonio Ciani, student leader, is disappeared on his way to San Carlos University in Guatemala City.

1983: Augusto Ramírez Monasterio, Franciscan, martyr to the defense of the poor, Guatemala.

8

Thirty-second Sunday in Ordinary Time

1Kings 17,10-16 / Ps 145

Heb 9,24-28 / Mk 12,38-44

Adeodato

1897: Birth of Dorothy Day, co-founder of the Catholic Worker movement, pacifist and social activist.

1976: Carlos Fonseca, Nicaraguan patriot, teacher and founder of the Sandinista National Liberation Front, is killed.

1987: Indigenous martyrs of Pai Vavyterá, Paraguay.

9

Monday

Wis 1,1-9 / Ps 138

Lk 17,1-6

Theodore

1938: Kristallnacht sees Nazi pogrom destroy some 2,000 synagogues, thousands of Jewish businesses, kill 91 and arrest over 25,000 Jews.

1977: Justo Mejia, peasant unionist and catechist, is martyred for his faith in El Salvador.

1984: First Meeting of Black Religious, seminarians and priests in Rio de Janeiro.

1989: The Berlin Wall falls.

10

Tuesday

Wis 2,23-3,9 / Ps 33

Lk 17,7-10

Leo the Great

1483: Birth of Martin Luther in Germany.

1969: The Brazilian government forbids publication of news about Indigenous peoples, guerrillas, the Black movement and anything against racial discrimination.

1980: Policiano Alberño, Evangelical pastor, and, Raúl Alberño, martyrs for justice, El Salvador.

1984: Alvaro Ulcué Chocué, a priest and a Páez, the largest indigenous nation in Colombia, is assassinated in Santander.

1996: Assassination of Jafeth Morales López, popular Colombian activist, animator of BECs.

2004: The Commission against Torture turns over the testimony of 35,000 victims of the Pinochet dictatorship.

11

Wednesday

Wis 6,1-11 / Ps 81

Lk 17,11-19

Martin of Tours

Soren Kierkegaard

1983: Sebastián Acevedo, activist, martyr to devoted love of the Chilean people.

1999: Death of Jacobo Timmerman, Argentine journalist and human rights advocate, jailed and tortured for writing about the government's role in disappearances.

New Moon: 17h47m (UTC) en Escorpio



12 Thursday

Wis 7,22-8,1 / Ps 118
Lk 17,20-25

Josaphat

1838: Abolition of slavery in Nicaragua.

1980: Nicolás Tum Quistán, catechist and Eucharistic minister, is martyred for solidarity in Guatemala.

1987: Miguel Angel del Tránsito Ortiz, pastoral animator, assassinated in Plan del Pino, El Salvador.

2008: Judge Baltasar Garzón orders the investigation of executions during the Franco regime in Spain.

13 Friday

Leandro

1969: Indalecio Oliveira Da Rosa, a 33 year-old priest, is martyred for his support of Uruguayan liberation movements.

1974: Karen Silkwood, labor activist and corporate critic, dies in a suspicious accident in Oklahoma.

14 Saturday

Wis 13,1-9 / Ps 18
Lk 17,26-37

Diego de Alcalá

1817: Policarpa 'La Pola' Salavarrieta, heroine of Colombian independence, is executed by the Spanish.

1960: National strike of 400,000 railroad, port and ship workers, Brazil.

1984: Cesar C. Climaco, a Philippine politician and prominent critic of the Marcos dictatorship, is assassinated in Zamboanga City, Philippines.

15

Thirty-third Sunday in Ordinary Time
Dan 12,1-3 / Ps 15
Heb 10,11-14.18 / Mk 13,24-32

Albert the Great

1562: Juan del Valle, Bishop of Popayán, Colombia, pilgrim in the Indigenous cause.

1781: Julián 'Tupac Katari' Apasa, leader of indigenous uprising in Bolivia, is executed by the colonial army.

1889: Brazil is declared a Republic.

1904: US Marines land in Ancón, Panama.

1987: Fernando Vélez, lawyer and human rights activist, is martyred in Colombia.

16 Monday

1Macc 1,10-15,41-43,54-57,62-64
Margaret, Gertrude Ps 118 / Lk 18,35-43
Day of Sacrifice in Islam.
1982: Founding of the Latin American Council of Churches (CLAI).
1885: Louis Riel, Canadian Métis leader, is executed after a failed rebellion.
1989: Ignacio Ellacuría, his Jesuit companions and two female domestic employees of the University of Central America in El Salvador are massacred by the military.

International Day for Tolerance (UN)

17 Tuesday

Elizabeth of Hungary
1858: Death of Robert Owen, social reformer considered father of the cooperative movement.
1985: Luis Che, Celebrant of the Word, martyred for his faith, in Guatemala.

18 Wednesday

2Macc 6,18-31 / Ps 3
Lk 19,1-10 Elsa
2Macc 7,1,20-31 / Ps 16
Lk 19,11-28
1970: Gil Tablada is assassinated for his opposition to land grabs in La Cruz, Costa Rica.
1999: Iñigo Eguiluz Tellería, a Basque volunteer, and José Luis Maso, a priest, are assassinated by paramilitaries at Quibdó, Colombia.
2000: Alcira Del Carmen Herrera Pérez, wife of a labor leader killed in 1996, is taken from her home in Uraba Antioqueño, Colombia and shot.



19 Thursday

1Macc 2,15-29 / Ps 49

Abdias, Crispin

Lk 19,41-44

1681: Roque González, witness to the faith in the Paraguayan Church, and his companion Jesuits Juan and Alfonso, martyrs.

1915: Joe Hill, American labor activist, executed after a controversial trial.

1980: Santos Jiménez Martínez and Jerónimo 'Don Chomo', Protestant pastors, are martyred in Guatemala.

2000: Fujimori, while in Japan, presents his demission as president of Peru by fax.

First quarter: 06h27m (UTC) in Aquarius



20 Friday

1Macc 4,36-37.52-59 / 1Chr 29,10-13

Felix of Valois, Octavio

Lk 19,45-48

1542: The New Laws regularize the encomiendas in the New Indies.

1695: Zumbi de los Palmares, leader of slave resistance in Brazil, is martyred, National Day for Black Consciousness in Brazil.

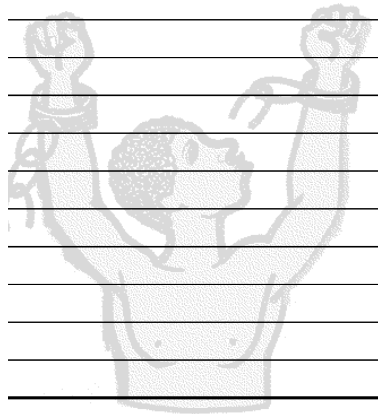
1976: Guillermo Woods, missionary priest, former US combatant in Vietnam, martyr, Guatemala.

1978: Ricardo Talavera is assassinated in Managua, Nicaragua by the National Guard.

2000: Enrique Arancibia, former agent of the Chilean DINA, is condemned for the attempts on the life of General Pratts in Buenos Aires on Sept. 30, 1984.

Universal Children's Day

Día mundial por la Industrialización de África



21 Saturday

1Macc 6,1-13 / Ps 9

Presentation of Mary

Lk 20,27-40

1831: Colombia declares itself a sovereign State, thus separating from Great Colombia.

1927: Six striking coal miners are killed by police at the Columbine Mine in Colorado.

1966: Founding of the National Organization of Women (NOW), Chicago.

1975: Peasants of La Union, Honduras, are massacred by mercenaries hired by land barons.

World Television Day (UN)

22

Thirty-fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Dan 7,13-14 / Ps 92

Apoc 1,5-8 / Jn 18,33b-37

Cecilia

World Music Day.

1910: João Cândido, the "Black Admiral," leads the Chibata revolt against near-slavery conditions in the Brazilian Navy.

1963: John F. Kennedy is assassinated in Dallas, Texas.

23 Monday

Dan 1,1-6.8-20 / Dan 3,52-56

Clemente

Lk 21,1-4

1927: Miguel Agustín Pro, a Jesuit priest, executed by the Mexican government as part of the fiercely anti-clerical response to the Cristero Rebellion.

1974: Amílcar Oviedo D., worker leader, dies in Paraguay.

1980: Ernesto Abrego, pastor, disappeared with four of his Brothers in El Salvador.

24 Tuesday

Dan 2,31-45 / Dan 3,57-61

Andrew Dung-Lac

Lk 21,5-11

1590: Agustín de La Coruña, Bishop of Popayán, exiled and imprisoned for defending Indigenous people.

1807: Joseph 'Thayendanegea' Brant, Mohawk war chief and tireless negotiator for the Six Nations, dies in Ontario.

1957: Diego Rivera, Mexican muralist and husband of Frida Kahlo, dies in Mexico.

1980: The Russell Tribunal studies 14 cases of violation of human Rights against Indigenous peoples.

25 Wednesday

Dan 5,1-6.13-14.16-17.23-28 / Dan 3,62-63

Catherine of Alexandria, *Isaac Watts*

Lk 21,12-19

1808: A law is signed that concedes land to non-Black foreigners who come to Brazil.

1960: Maria Teresa, Minerva and Patria Mirabal, social justice activists and opponents of the Trujillo dictatorship are assassinated along with Rufino de la Cruz.

1975: Independence of Surinam, National Holiday.

1983: Marçal da Sousa, a Tupá'i leader, martyred in the struggle for Indigenous land rights in Brazil.

1997 : APEC protests in Vancouver (Canada).

**International Day for the Elimination
of Violence against Women**

Full Moon: 22h44m (UTC) in Gemini



1984: Campesinos of Chapi and Lucmahuayco, Peru are martyred.

1992: Attempted State coup in Venezuela.

1980: Marcial Serrano, parish priest, is martyred for his work with Salvadoran peasants.

1Thess 3,12-4,2 / Lk 21,25-28,34-36

1976: Pablo Gazzari, Argentinean priest, is kidnapped and thrown live into the sea from one of the notorious military "flights of death".

RELEASE OSCAR LÓPEZ RIVERA FROM PRISON, NOW!

A CASE OF HUMAN RIGHTS

JOSÉ J. NAZARIO DE LA ROSA

Caguas, Puerto Rico

Oscar López Rivera was born in San Sebastián, Puerto Rico, in 1943. His family moved to the United States of America (USA), when he was an adolescent. Like many Latino youth and Afro-American men, he was recruited for the United States army. It was in Vietnam where Oscar started to understand the discrimination and oppression that being Puerto Rican meant in the United States. He was awarded the Bronze Star for his courage in Vietnam. When he came back from the war in 1967, he realised the appalling conditions of the Puerto Rican community, racism and discrimination, which had reached critical levels, and he started to work to improve the life conditions of his people.

As a conscious young of his condition as Puerto Rican, he participated with other youths in the organisation of the community to denounce and stop the police brutality, miserable housing conditions, an education system that ignores the needs of the Puerto Rican students, and the issue of colonialism of Puerto Rico.

He actively participated in the struggle for a bilingual education in public schools and for universities to recruit students, personnel and professors of Latino origin. He also helped to start educational programmes in a high security prison for men. He participated in the struggle against drugs and discrimination in public services.

Puerto Rico and its inhabitants, with no consultation and under military force, was handed over to the United States as spoils of war by a void act under international law, known as The Paris Treaty, on 10 December 1898. Since then Puerto Rico is an invaded country under a colonial regime. No country should be subject to foreign domination or colonialism, which is a crime against humanity; hence, the inalienable right of a people to fight against colonialism in all its forms and manifestations is recognised.

At present Oscar López Rivera is 72 years old. He was arrested in 1981 for his fight and hard work for the independence of Puerto Rico and as member of Fuerzas Armadas de Liberación Nacional (FLAN). This year he has been held captive for 34 years. He is the Puerto Rican political prisoner who has been the longest in a prison of the United States. He was convicted of seditious conspiracy and condemned to a disproportionate sentence of 55 years in prison, which was later extended to 70 years. He was not convicted for murder or violent attack to another human being. He has suffered imprisonment with torture conditions. His release has been settled for the year 2027, when he will be 84 years old.

“The purpose of colonialism is to destroy nationality”, the Puerto Rican poet and revolutionary leader Don Juan Antonio Corretjer denounced. It is contrary to peace and security, it is a crime in all its forms and manifestations and allows all Peoples to fight by all means for their national liberation, self-determination, independence, national integrity and national unity. “The accusation of seditious conspiracy cannot be made against any Puerto Rican. The Puerto Rican cannot be seditious”, Corretjer sentenced.

And he dictated, “We cannot be seditious no matter how much we conspire, what we do to become independent from the Yankee imperialism... Because we are not within the federal state, because we are a separate country, because we are a Latin American nation militarily occupied by the United States, this occupation imposed and is imposing on our people an ignominious colonialism, anti-historical, mendacious, condemned and condemnable. Condemned to disappear”.

The prolonged incarceration of López Rivera constitutes an open violation to human rights. During his imprisonment he has been exposed to more

Translation by Alice Méndez

than a decade of solitary confinement. multiple acts of humiliation, as well as a cruel, inhumane and degrading treatment. Oscar himself has expressed about his prison process:

I use the word spirit-crime to describe the dehumanisation and harmful existence I have suffered since I am in prison, particularly during the years I have been in this dungeon... It is a spirit-crime because it is the death and extermination of the spirit what the jailers look for keeping me under such obnoxious conditions...

I cannot for a second lose sight of the sinister and ubiquitous look of the villains who as predators are only searching for the best moment to commit the spirit-crime...

I know that the human spirit has the capacity to resuscitate after suffering the spirit-crime and, as the rose and the leaf that withers, falls and dies and in its place a new and stronger one is born, my spirit will resuscitate...

The other political prisoners, judged, convicted and condemned together with Oscar –after having suffered between 16 and 20 years of prison- were released from prison after a decision of the President of the United States, William J. Clinton. In 1999 he commuted the sentences, after determining they were disproportionately excessive and unjust. Since then they have gone back to their communities, and are productive and an example.

“The imposition of disproportionate sentences involving decades of imprisonment shows the brutality of a terror regime derived from the colonial domination structures”, expressed Juan Santiago Nieves. That brutal and terrifying regime is totally incompatible with the principles of the United Nations Organisation Charter and with the fundamental rights stated in the Universal Human Rights Declaration.

The civil society of Puerto Rico, the Puerto Rican community of the United States, and their leaders, of all political parties, unions, religious and cultural organisations, demand the immediate release of Oscar López Rivera. Winners of the Nobel Peace Prize such as the Bishop Desmond Tutu, Adolfo Pérez Esquivel, Rigoberta Menchú, Mairead

Macguire, José Ramos Horta and other outstanding personalities, politicians, religious people, artists from Latin American, African, Asian and European countries have recently demanded from President of the United States, Barack Obama, to exercise his constitutional power of pardon ordering the immediate and unconditional release of Oscar López Rivera.

Despite adversities in prison, Oscar has kept his political, physical, emotional and intellectual integrity. With a good physical condition, he concentrates on studies, keeping up to date in present issues, writing and painting. As part of his punishment his creative activity is suddenly interrupted, conditioned and sometimes limited.

United States, the jailer, has the obligation under international law to respect self-determination of the people of Puerto Rico. According to the I Protocol of the Geneva Convention of 1949, the protection that such International Convention recognises to war prisoners, also covers those people captured in conflicts or struggles against colonial occupation, the occupation of a country by racist regimes and those that participate in struggles for the free determination of their peoples. This is also ratified by the 2852 Resolution (XXVI) of the United Nations General Assembly of 20 December 1971 and the 3103 Resolution (XXVIII) of 13 December 1973 that states:

“Every participant in resistance movements, that fights for independence and self-determination, if arrested, must receive the treatment established in the Geneva Convention”.

About Pedro Albizu Campos, Puerto Rican nationalist leader, the Che Guevara said: “Albizu Campos is a symbol of America, still unredeemed but untamed. Years and years of imprisonment, almost unbearable pressures in jail, mental tortures, solitude, total isolation from family and community, insolence of the conqueror and his serfs in the land he was born; nothing broke his will”.

His words suit the Puerto Rican prisoner whose will has never been bent or subjected: Oscar López Rivera, always resisting and fighting.

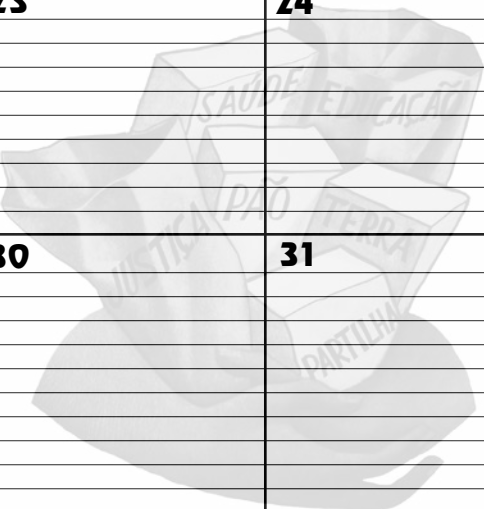


2015

November

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Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday
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30 Monday

Rom 10,9-18 / Ps 18

Andrew Apostle

Mt 4,18-22

Eloy

1966: Independence of Barbados, National holiday.

1967: The Brazilian Bishops' Conference (CNBB) protests against the imprisonment of priests.

1989: Luis Velez Vinazco, a union activist, is disappeared in Bugalagrande, Colombia.

1 Tuesday

Isa 11,1-10 / Ps 71

Lk 10,21-24

Viviana

1981: Diego Uribe, a Colombian priest, is martyred in the struggle for the liberation of his people.

2000: Vicente Fox is sworn in as Mexico's President ending 71 years of one party, PRI, domination.

2000: Chilean Judge Guzmán orders house imprisonment and a trial for Pinochet.

2 Wednesday

Isa 25,6-10a / Ps 22

Mt 15,29-37

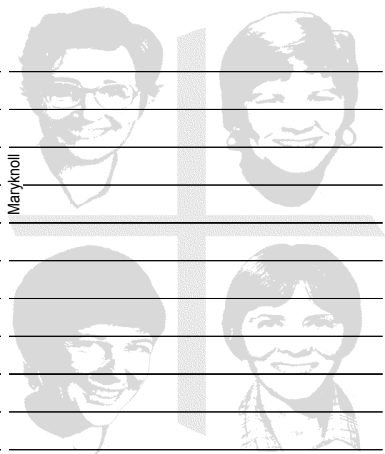
1823: Declaration of the Munroe Doctrine: "America for the Americans."

1956: The Granma lands in Cuba.

1980: Ita Ford, Maura Clarke, Maryknoll Sisters, Dorothy Kazel, Ursuline, and Jean Donovan, a lay person are raped and murdered by the Salvadoran military death squad.

1990: Peasants of Atitlán, Guatemala, are martyred.

International Anti-Slavery Day (U.N.)



3 Thursday

Francis Xavier
 1502: Moctezuma is enthroned as Lord of Tenochtitlán.
 1987: Victor Raúl Acuña, priest, dies in Peru.
 2002: Ivan Illich, priest, philosopher and sociologist of liberation, dies.



Last quarter: 07h40m (UTC) in Virgo

Isa 26,1-6 / Ps 117
 Mt 7,21.24-27

4 Friday

John Damascene, Bárbara
 1677: Portuguese forces under Fernán Carrillo attack the slave resistance settlement of Quilombo de Palmares, Brazil.
 1969: Fred Hampton and Mark Clark, Black Panther leaders, are shot to death in their sleep by 14 Chicago police officers.

Isa 29,17-24 / Ps 26
 Mt 9,27-31

5 Saturday

Sabas
 1492: Columbus arrives in Hispaniola on his voyage to the Americas.
 1810: Miguel Hidalgo makes public the Proclamation of Restitution of Indigenous lands to Indigenous peoples, thus ending the system of encomiendas, arrendamientos and haciendas in Mexico.
 1824: The Brazilian Constitution, through a complementary law, forbids schooling for lepers and Blacks.
 1893: Farabundo Martí, Salvadoran revolutionary, is born.
 2000: Two former Argentinean generals during the dictatorship, Suárez Masón and Santiago Riveros, are condemned to life imprisonment by an Italian court.

Isa 30,19-21.23-26 / Ps 146
 Mt 9,35-10,1.6-8

International Volunteer Day



Nicholas of Bari, *Nicholas of Mira*
 1534: Founding of Quito.

1928: Over a thousand striking United Fruit Company banana workers are killed in Colombian military crack down.
 1969: Death of João Cândido, the «Black Admiral», hero of the Revolt of Chibata in 1910.
 1982: Guatemalan government forces wipe out the village of Dos Erres. Over 300 die.
 1989 Montreal Polytechnique Massacre (14 women killed 14 wounded) - National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence against Women.

Second Sunday of Advent
 Bar 5,1-9 / Ps 125
 Phil 1,4-6.8-11 / Lk 3,1-6

7

Monday

Isa 35,1-10 / Ps 84

Ambrose

Lk 5,17-26

1975: The military government of Indonesia invades East Timor, killing 60,000 people in two months.

1981: Lucio Aguirre and Elpidio Cruz, Honduran Ministers of the Word, are martyred because of their solidarity with Salvadoran refugees.

8

Tuesday

Gen 3,9-15.20 / Ps 97

Immaculate Conception

Eph 1,3-6.11-12 Lk 1,26-38

1542: Las Casas finishes his "Short Account of the Destruction of the Indies."

1965: The Second Vatican Council ends.

1976: Ana Garófalo, Methodist, martyr to the cause of the poor, Buenos Aires, Argentina.

1977: Alicia Domont and Leonie Duquet, Religious, are martyred for their solidarity with the disappeared in Argentina.

1997: Samuel Hermán Calderón, a priest who worked with campesinos in Oriente, Colombia, is assassinated by paramilitaries.

2004: 12 countries establish the South American Community of Nations: 361 million inhabitants.

9

Wednesday

Isa 40,1-11 / Ps 95

Leocadia, Valerio

Mt 18,12-14

1569: Birth of Martin de Porres, patron saint of social justice, in Peru.

1824: Antonio Sucre leads independence forces to victory in the final battle against the Spanish at Ayacucho, Peru.



10 Thursday

Isa 41,13-20 / Ps 144

Eulalia de Mérida

1898: Spain is defeated and cedes Puerto Rico and the Philippines to the USA.

1948: The United Nations proclaims the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

1977: Azucena Villaflor, founder of the Mothers of May Square, is disappeared in Buenos Aires.

1996: The Nobel Peace Prize in 1992 is granted to José Ramos Horta, the author of the peace plan for East Timor and to Carlos Ximenes Belo, Bishop of Dili.

1997: The Socialist Government of France approves the reduction of the work week to 35 hours.

Human Rights Day (ONU)

11 Friday

Isa 48,17-19 / Ps 1

Dámaso, *Lars Olsen Skrefsrud*

1978: Gaspar García Laviana, a priest, is martyred in the struggle for freedom in Nicaragua.

1994: The First American Summit, in Miami. The governments decide to create the FTAA, without the participation of the people. It will fall apart in 2005.

New Moon: 10h29m (UTC) in Sagittarius

12 Saturday

Zech 2,14-17 / Ps 95

Lk 1,39-45

Guadalupe, Juan Diego

1531: The Virgin of Guadalupe appears to Juan Diego at Tepeyac, Mexico where the Nahuatl people venerated Tonantzin, "the venerable mother".

1981: Massacre of "El Mozote." Hundreds of campesinos are killed in Morazán, El Salvador.

1983: Prudencio "Tencho" Mendoza, seminarian, martyred in Huehuetenango, Guatemala.

2002: Congress throws out former President Aleman for fraud of millions, Nicaragua.

2009: Ronaldo Muñoz, theologian of liberation theology and an example of the coherence between faith, theology and practice, dies in Santiago, Chile.



13

Third Sunday of Advent
Zeph 3,14-18a / Isa 12,2-6
Phil 4,4-7 / Lk 3,10-18

Lucy

1976: 22 political prisoners are executed in army operation "to eliminate terrorists" at Margarita Belén, Argentina.

1978: Independence of St. Lucy.

1937: The fall of Nanjing, China to Japanese troops begins several weeks of raping and killing of more than 200,000 civilians and prisoners.

14 Monday

Num 24,2-7.15-17a / Ps 24
Mt 21,23-27

John of the Cross
Teresa of Avila

1890: Rui Barbosa orders archives on slavery in Brazil to be burned in order to wipe out the memory.

1973: The UN identifies Puerto Rico as a colony and affirms its right to independence.

1989: Death of Andrei Dmitrievich Sakharov, Soviet nuclear physicist, human rights activist and 1975 Nobel Peace Prize recipient, 1975.

2003: José María Ruiz Furlán, a priest who worked in slums of Guatemala with popular organizations, is assassinated.

15 Tuesday

Zeph 3,1-2.9-13 / Ps 33
Mt 21,28-32

Valerian

1890: Sitting Bull or Ta-Tanka I-Yotank, a Lakota Sioux holy man and leader, is killed by police on the Standing Rock Indian Reservation, in South Dakota.

1975: Daniel Bombara, Argentinean university student, is martyred for his commitment to the poor.

16 Wednesday

Isa 45,6-25 / Ps 84
Lk 7,19-23

Adelaida

1984: Eloy Ferreira da Silva, Brazilian labor leader, is assassinated for his defense of land rights.

1990: Jean-Bertrand Aristide, former priest, is elected President of Haiti in the country's first modern day democratic elections.

1991: Indigenous martyrs of Cauca, Colombia.

1993: Popular uprising in Santiago del Estero, Argentina.



17 Thursday

Gen 49,2-8-10 / Ps 71

Juan de Mata, Lazarus
1819: The Republic of Great Colombia is proclaimed in Angostura.
1830: Death of Simon Bolivar, the Venezuelan-born independence leader of Spanish South America, near Santa Maria, Colombia.
1948: Uriel Sotomayor, a Nicaraguan student leader, is murdered in Leon for his opposition to Somoza dictatorship.
2009: Antonio Aparecida da Silva, Black Latin American theologian dies, in São Paulo-Marília, Brasil.

18 Friday

Jer 23,5-8 / Ps 71

Rufo y Zósimo
1979: Massacre of campesinos in Ondores, Peru.
1979: Massacre of peasants in El Porvenir, Opico, El Salvador.
1985: João Canuto and sons, labor leader in Brazil.
1992: Manuel Campo Ruiz, Marianist, victim of police corruption, Rio de Janeiro.
1994: The remains of Nelson MacKay are recovered, the first case of the 184 disappeared in Honduras during the 1980s.

International Migrants Day (U.N.)

First quarter: 15h14m (UTC) in Pisces



19 Saturday

Judg 13,2-7.24-25a / Ps 70

Nemesio
1994: Mexican economic crisis: 10 days later the devaluation of the peso reaches 100%.
1994: Alfonso Stessel, 65 year-old Belgian priest working with the poor, is assassinated in Guatemala by an agent of state security.
2001: After a speech by President De la Rúa, the Argentinean people take to the streets provoking his demission.
2001: Claudio "Pocho" Lepratti, dedicated servant of the poor, is killed by police in Rosario, Argentina (pochormiga.com.ar).

20

Fourth Sunday of Advent
Mic 5,1-4a / Ps 79
Heb 10,5-10 / Lk 1,39-45

Domingo de Silos, Ceferino
1818: Luis Beltrán, Franciscan, "first engineer in the liberation army of the Andes," Argentina.
1962: Juan Bosch wins presidency of the Dominican Republic in first free elections in 38 years.
1989: The United States invades Panama to overthrow the government of General Manuel Noriega.

21 Monday

Cant 2,8-14 / Ps 32

Peter Canisius, *Thomas Apostle*

Lk 1,39-45

1511: Homily of Fray Antonio de Montesinos in La Española.
1598: Cacique Pelentaru leads Mapuche in defeating Spanish at Battle of Curalaba and maintaining indigenous control of southern Chile for nearly 300 more years.

1907: Over 3500 miners striking for better living conditions are massacred at Santa Maria de Iquique, Chile.

1964: Guillermo Sardiña, priest, in solidarity with his people in the struggle against dictatorship, Cuba.

2009: Lula proposes a Brazilian Truth Commission to pass judgement on 400 deaths, 200 disappearances and 20,000 tortured during the military dictatorship from 1964 to 1985 in Brazil, with 24,000 agents of repression and 334 torturers.

22 Tuesday

1Sam 1,24-28 / 1Sam 2,1-8

Lk 1,46-56

Francis Cabrini

1815: José María Morelos is sent before a firing squad, hero of the independence of Mexico, after having been exiled by the Inquisition.

1988: Francisco "Chico" Mendes, environmental leader, is assassinated by land barons in Xapuri, Brazil.

1997: 46 Tzotziles gathered in prayer are massacred at Acteal, Mexico by paramilitaries in the service of land barons and the PRI.

Winter solstice in the North,
Summer solstice in the South, at 05h48m

23 Wednesday

Mal 3,1-4.23-24 / Ps 24

Lk 1,57-66

Juan de Kety

1896: Conflict between the US and Great Britain over Venezuelan Guyana.

1952: Vo Thi Sau, 17 year-old revolutionary Vietnamese heroine is shot by the French.

1972: An earthquake rated at 6.2 on the Richter scale destroys Managua, more than 10 thousand dead.

1989: Gabriel Félix R. Maire, French priest, assassinated in Vitoria, Brazil for his commitment to the poor.



24 Thursday

(Christmas Eve) Isa 9,1-3.5-6 / Ps 95

Herminia and Adela Titus 2,11-14 / Lk 2,1-14
1524: Vasco da Gama, Portuguese explorer who opened India and East Africa to European colonization, dies in Goa.
1873: Brazilian government takes repressive action against the quilombo's, African fugitive slave settlements, guerrillas in Sergipe, Brazil.

25 Friday

Christmas

Isa 52,7-10 / Ps 97 Stephen

Heb 1,1-6 / Jn 1,1-18

1553: Valdivia is defeated in Tucapel by the Mapuche.
1652: Alonso de Sandoval, prophet and defender of African slaves, dies in Cartagena, Colombia.
1951: Bomb blast kills Harry T. Moore, teacher and U.S. civil rights activist.

Full Moon: 11h11m (UTC) in Cancer



26 Saturday

Acts 6,8-10; 7,54-60 / Ps 30

Mt 10,17-22

1864: Beginning of the War of the Triple Alliance; Brazil, Argentina and Uruguay against Paraguay which would suffer 60% mortality of its population.
2004: Tsunami claims more than 300,000 lives around rim of Indian Ocean.

27

Holy Family

Sir 3,2-6.12-14 / Ps 127

Col 3,12-21 / Lk 2,41-52

John the Evangelist

1512: Promulgation of the New Laws providing norms for encomiendas in the Indies after the complaints of Pedro de Córdoba and Antonio Montesinos.
1979: Angelo Pereira Xavier, chief of the Pankararé nation in Brazil, is murdered in his people's struggle for their land.
2001: Petrona Sánchez, peasant and women's leader, assassinated by FARC rebels at Costa de Oro, Colombia.
1996: Strike of a million South Koreans against a labor law that makes firing easier.
2007: Benazir Butto is assassinated, in Pakistan.
2011: Jose María 'Pichi' Meisegeier sj. Miembro del MSTM (Mov. Sacerdotes para el Tercer Mundo). Incaudicable en la Causa de los pobres del pueblo villero. Argentina.

28 Monday

1Jn 1,5-2,2 / Ps 123

Holy Innocents

Mt 2,13-18

1925: The Prestes Column attacks Teresina, PI, Brazil.

1977: Massacre of campesinos at Huacataz, Peru.

2001: Edwin Ortega, Chocano peasant and youth leader, is murdered by FARC rebels at a youth assembly on the Jiguamiandó River in Colombia.

29 Tuesday

Thomas Becket

1987: Over 70 miners from Serra Pelada, Marabá, Brazil are attacked and shot by military police at the Tocantins River.

1996: Guatemalan peace accords are signed ending 36 years of hostilities that saw 44 villages destroyed and more than 100,000 deaths.

International Day of Diversity

30 Wednesday

1Jn 2,3-11 / Ps 95

Lk 2,22-35

Sabino

1502: The largest fleet of the time sails from Spain: 30 ships with 1,200 men, commanded by Nicolás de Obando.

1896: Dr. José Rizal, a national hero of the Philippines and one of Asia's first modern proponents of non-violent political change is executed by the Spanish.

1934: Anticlerical 'red shirts' open fire of church goers in Coyoacán, Mexico killing five and wounding many.

1Jn 2,12-17 / Ps 95

Lk 2,36-40



2 Saturday

Jn 1.1-18

2004: Iginio Hernandez Vasquez, indigenous land advocate, murdered by paid assassins in Honduras.

[illegible]

1 F	1 M	1 T
2 S	2 T	2 W
3 S	3 W	3 T
4 M	4 T	4 F
5 T	5 F	5 S
6 W	6 S	6 S
7 T	7 S	7 M
8 F	8 M	8 T
9 S	9 T	9 W
10 S	10 W ^{Ashes}	10 T
11 M	11 T	11 F
12 T	12 F	12 S
13 W	13 S	13 S
14 T	14 S	14 M
15 F	15 M	15 T
16 S	16 T	16 W
17 S	17 W	17 T
18 M	18 T	18 F
19 T	19 F	19 S
20 W	20 S	20 S
21 T	21 S	21 M
22 F	22 M	22 T
23 S	23 T	23 M
24 S	24 W	24 T
25 M	25 T	25 F
26 T	26 F	26 S
27 W	27 S	27 S ^{Easter}
28 T	28 S	28 M
29 F	29 M	29 T
30 S		30 W
31 S		31 T

2016

April

May

June

1 F	1 S	1 W
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8 F	8 S	8 W
9 S	9 M	9 T
10 S	10 T	10 F
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14 T	14 S	14 W
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16 S	16 T	16 F
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22 F	22 M	22 T
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24 S	24 W	24 S
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30 S	30 T	30 F
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THE RIGHT TO DREAM/PRACTISE ALTERNATIVES

SERGIO FERRARI

Berna, Switzerland - Buenos Aires, Argentina

Only the “collective right to dream” can be as important or even more important than human rights in their broadest sense –economic, social, cultural or individual-. This dreaming collectively means searching for alternatives: at micro, macro levels, in the daily social practice, or in the elaboration of theories that promote the common welfare.

Land, social democracy, collective ethics.

Marinaleda, with only 25 square kilometres and 300 inhabitants, is a place in the world where each worker earns the same, around 1.200 Euros, for 35 hours of work per month. In a small municipality of Andalucía (Spain) where unemployment of the economically active population was above 30% in 2014, its leftist government for 35 years now, has been able to consolidate an alternative model of society: with 15 Euros a month, each family can have its home, and a kindergarten with dining hall does not cost more than 12 Euros a month per kid.

This is the result of a participative way of understanding politics. The governing party and a strong agrarian union reinforce their synergies using the institutional instruments of the City Hall to implement an effective social democracy.

The fight for land –occupations, strikes, protests– boosted social conquests, requiring patience and creativity, in a rural region where the 2% of landowners possess more than 50% of the land.

Agriculture, though important, was insufficient; against unemployment, today non-existent in Marinaleda, a local industry was created with the Humar Cooperative Group (a cannery).

The “Peace Utopia”, as the logo-coat of arms of this Andalusian place shows, came into being through wide participation claiming that “power is not neutral”, based on a strict moral, expressed, for example, in the resignation of members of the City Hall to their salaries and special bonuses.

The “landless” think in society as a whole

Almost 10 thousand kilometres away from that Andalusian laboratory, the *Movement of Landless*

Rural Workers (MST) in Brazil, who held in February 2014 its 6th. Congress with the participation of thousands of representatives and activists, is permanently exercising its “collective right to alternatives”. Considered one of the most important social actors in the Continent, it promotes the international web *Via Campesina*, and integrates a new concept of power related to the fight for land and the agrarian reform.

In each new occupation of unproductive land, as a first symbolic action, a small school is built for the education of the occupants’ children. Each rural mobilisation tries to get a citizenship alliance. The managerial posts rotate. There is a permanent back and forth movement between management (coordination) and the bases. There is no president or secretary general, and management is collective and decentralised.

One of the most transcendental objectives for the MST is food sovereignty, which implies confronting the model of production of the agri-business with its exporting priority, and denouncing actively the abusive use of agro-chemicals and GMOs. Each Brazilian consumes today in his food about 5 litres of poison a year. Confronting this irrational system must be done by the whole of Brazilian society, including as well, according to the MST, the debate over a change of paradigm in the country and a new model of society.

The MST has already been able to give 400 thousand families their land, although another 150 thousand still wait in shanty towns. In these shanty towns hundreds of cooperatives and associations ensure the production of food, integrating as well –as in the Andalusian experience of Marinaleda– the development of an agro-industry (almost a hundred establishments in all the country). The Landless oppose the model which considers land as simple merchandise, which supports monoculture, which has as its main objective exportation and despises nature, the environment, the soil and the human being totally. And they propose the paradigm of agro-

Translation by Alice Méndez

ecological family production which has its bases in agro-cooperation with the necessary ingredient of agro-industry. The MST is already, for example in Rio Grande del Sur, one of the main producers, in permanent development, of certified organic rice. On the other hand, thousands of tonnes of their agricultural products enrich –under an alliance with the authorities- the basic diet of school children in all Brazil.

The cities of the future

Porto Alegre, capital of the Southern Province of Brazil, launched the participative budget as a tool of direct democracy. It was 1989 and the Party of Workers (PT) had just won municipal elections. Good time to submit financial and budgetary priorities to a gradual exercise of community analysis, through citizen assemblies designating delegates, and, from their neighbourhoods and regions, they were able to encompass the whole city.

The novel experience of the participative budget could be the magnet which attracted so many people to that city for the 1st World Social Forum (WSF) in 2001. After 14 years in existence and 9 centralised conclaves held in 3 continents, the WSF is now the broadest space for the world organised civil society.

After little more than 25 years of that first Brazilian experience of participative budget, more than 1500 cities in the world, of the most varied dimensions –Brasília, Buenos Aires, Bolonia, Sevilla, Málaga, Portland, Ontario, Yokohama, etc.- practise it today in various modalities.

The urban planners who are committed socially emphasize that the city of tomorrow is now being built, and they, in these last years, are enriching concepts and proposals. Those millions threatened by urban removals –and Brazil is a typical case internationally visible for the social costs the construction of the 2014 World Cup stadiums implied- are part of the picture. “All individuals must own the whole of the city”, they state. This means to contest public spaces, to fight for drinking water, the construction of schools and health centres, sewage and public transport.

And within this frame, there are many alternatives in the world, parallel to the deepening of urban tensions as a result of excessive concentration. For example the more than 250 Community Land Trusts, collective structures of land property, born in the

United States since the 80’s, which now appear even in China and India; or the property cooperatives in other cities of the world with the aim of democratising access to urban property with a social sense. At the same time urban or peri-urban agriculture is in expansion: community orchards and other socio-cultural initiatives in neighbourhoods that develop paradigms of belonging and appropriation citizenship.

Another thought is possible...

In the last years, together with the expansion of indigenous participation in new political processes in Latin America –Bolivia, Ecuador, for example- the concept of Good Living has been developing as an alternative to conventional development, a concept belonging to the indigenous people of the continent which is gaining political visibility in the new Constitutions of these two Andean States.

The new relationship with *Mother Earth*, the break with the anthropocentric logic of capitalism and real socialism, the questioning of concepts up to now untouchable such as that of development and growth, open a process that stimulates interesting thoughts even in the North. For example theories such as that of de-growth, have gained intellectual space in France, Switzerland, and other European countries.

Not underestimating the thought about eco-socialism, which is not new, but it gains some novelty in the present debate in Europe which is hit by a deep crisis of the social democratic thought.

This movement of ideas and practices includes as well the birth of new “theories” as that of “common welfare” or “public welfare”, as an economic project open to companies which looks to implement a sustainable and alternative economy in the financial markets. And incorporates as well the permanent considerations about an alternative communication as a need and ideological condition to bring worlds together, promote the conjunction of experiences and revitalise the debate about concepts and paradigms.

Local practices, global experiences, reanimated theories, new forms of thought... A concrete search, a propositional zigzag, an active exercise of the global citizen so as not to negotiate his basic right to dream.

CAUSES FOR THE ON-GOING EROSION OF OUR HUMAN RIGHTS

LEONARDO BOFF, *Petropolis, RJ, Brazil*

We are living in a world where human rights are violated at practically every level, familial, local, national and planetary. The 2013 Annual Report of Amnesty International, that covers 159 countries, makes just this painful observation, with respect to 2012. Instead of advancing respect for human dignity and the rights of individuals, peoples and ecosystems, we are returning to barbaric levels. The violations are endless, and the means of this aggression are increasingly sophisticated.

The most cowardly form are the «drones», planes without pilots, directed by a young soldier in front of a TV monitor, as if he were playing a game, who from a base in Texas manages to identify a group of Afghans celebrating a wedding, where presumably there may be a guerrillero from Al Qaeda. That presupposition is enough, with a small click, to launch a bomb that annihilates the whole group, including many innocent mothers and children.

Under this perverse form of preventive war, inaugurated by Bush and criminally continued by President Barack Obama, who has not fulfilled his campaign promises regarding human rights, like the closing of Guantanamo or suppression of the unpatriotic «Patriot's Act», anyone in the United States can be detained for terrorism, without the need to let the family know. This is like the illegal kidnapping that we in Latin America know all too well.

In terms of economics and human rights, a true Latin-Americanization of the United States is taking place, in the style of the worst moments of the times of our military dictatorships. Today, according to the Amnesty International Report, the United States is the country with the most violations of the rights of individuals and peoples.

With the greatest indifference, like an absolute Roman emperor, Obama refuses to offer any justification for the world espionage his government carries out, under the pretext of national security, covering areas ranging from tender email exchanges between two people in love, to the secret and multimillion businesses of Petrobras, violating the right of privacy of individuals and the sovereignty of whole countries. Security annuls the validity of the inalienable rights.

The continent that suffers the most violations is Africa. Africa is the forgotten and vandalized continent.

The big corporations and China buy lands there (land grabbing) to produce food for their populations. It is a neo-colonization more perverse than the previous one.

The thousands and thousands of refugees and immigrants caused by hunger and the erosion of their lands are the most vulnerable. They comprise a subclass of people rejected by almost every country, "in a globalization of insensibility", as Pope Francis called it. The situation of many women, according to the Amnesty international Report, is dramatic. Women comprise more than half of humanity. Many are victims of violence of all types, and in several parts of Africa and Asia, they are still being subjected to genital mutilation.

The most important fundament of human rights lies in the dignity of each human person, and in the respect due to that person. Dignity means that a human carries the spirit and the liberty that allows one to shape his/her own life. Respect is the recognition that every human being possesses an intrinsic value, that a human is an end in itself and is never a means to anything else. Before each human being, no matter how anonymous that person may be, all power finds its limit, including the State.

The fact is that we live in a type of world society that has identified the economy as its structuring axis. The reason is purely utilitarian, and everything, even the human person, as Pope Francis has said, is turned into «goods for consumption that once used can be discarded». In such a society there is no place for rights, only for interests. Even the sacred right to food and drink is guaranteed only to those who can pay. Those who cannot pay will wait by the table, with the dogs, hoping for some crumbs to fall from a table laid for the opulent.

In this economic, political, and commercial system are found the principal, but not exclusive, phenomena that inevitably lead to the violation of human dignity. The current system does not value persons, only their capacity to produce and to consume. The rest are just the remainders, oil to be used in production.

Besides being humanitarian and ethical, the task is principally political: how to transform this type of evil society into one where human beings can be humanly treated and enjoy basic rights. Otherwise, violence will be the norm.

Translation by Pio Celestino

DECOLONIAL THOUGHT AND HUMAN RIGHTS

HÉCTOR LAPORTA

Lima , Perú - New York, Estados Unidos

There is a contradiction between the rethoric of liberty of nineteenth century and the present and lived experience of violence and intolerance with the "other."

The independentist movements and the formation of the new Republics in Latin America against the Spanish colonialism of the mid-nineteenth century have in common the links between the new Nation-State and the Roman Catholic Church. Such alliance has changed and reformed in different manners in each Latin American countries.

Decolonial thought draw our attention to understand how colonialism did not end with the independentist wars but continue present in categories of thought, systems of beliefs and values in which subordinate identities and subjectivities in the Americas were reproduced by the Roman Catholic Church with the support of the new Creole dominant groups.

Two evidences of these links between the Roman Catholic Church and Latin American Nation-State are: the *Concordato* agreement established between the Roman Catholic Church and the new independent Republics; and second, the influence on ethics of the Roman Catholic Church in the restriction of civil rights to certain groups of citizens in issues such as: gender roles, marriage, and sexual life.


The first evidence is the *Concordato* agreement that most of the new independent Latin American countries signed with the Vatican State. Before we continue, it is important to remember that Benito Mussolini gave the status of independent state to the Vatican (1929). The *Concordato* is an agreement between the Nation-State and the Roman Catholic Church in terms of privileges, rights and economic benefits from the state. In some cases, like in Peru, the *Concordato* was originally signed by the military dictator Francisco Morales Bermúdez (1980) who was part of the Operation Condor, a campaign of political persecution against leftists orchestrated by the right-wing dictatorship of Latin America in the 1970's. This agreement between the Roman Catholic Church officials and the military dictatorships in Latin America was an accessory to the violation of human rights

and the thousands of disappearances in the region (Argentina, Uruguay, Chile, Bolivia and Peru). Presently, this agreement has turned anti-constitutional because it violates the principle of autonomy of the secular modern state of any particular religious creed. The prevalence of the *Concordato* violates the rights of the citizens who do not identify with that particular creed. In some countries, like Peru, the Roman Catholic bishops even received a salary from the state government in the same amount as a state minister.

The second evidence is the ideological influence of the Roman Catholic Church through moral values. Roman Catholic morality brakes any moral knowledge establishing a dualistic and antagonist perspective in the moral values of the citizens. A moral knowledge that is determinate by: heaven/evil; christian/ pagan; virtue/sin; clean/unclean. A system that is taught through catechism education, the discipline of the body through ritual and repression of sexual desires through confession. From this biopower the Roman Catholic orthodoxy established criteria for: marriage, sexual life, and gender roles.

Today, in the twenty first century this colonial thought violates the exercise of the rights of an important part of the population. Mostly women and the LGBTQ community.

In terms of marriage, beyond being a right of every citizen to get married according to a civil law, the Roman Catholic Church in Latin America has been attributed the monopoly to exercise marriage. Arguing that marriage is a religious ritual they pretend to establish criteria concerning who is and is not allowed to marry, denying other religious traditions and people's rights.

I have shown in these examples how the mechanisms of culture of colonialism works stigmatizing, objectifying, and discriminating that affects an important part of the population. Ways of thought and policies in which the citizens are treated as minors in which the father state and mother church has to tell them what is good and right for them. These are violations of rights that affect the poor classes, women, indigenous communities and LGBTQ communities. 

HUMAN RIGHTS: A TOOL IN DEFENCE OF THE POOR

POPULAR OFFICE BORIS VEGA, CEBES & FRATER

Masaya, Nicaragua

The Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen issued by the French Revolution in 1789 states that "Men are born free and equal in rights and remain so". Olympia de Gouges, a woman, tried to wear the masculine authorities down for the Declaration to consider women as well and to recognise them as citizens. Being rejected, Olympia rewrote the Declaration making it feminine and in 1791 published *The Rights of the Woman and the Citizen*. In 1793 she was guillotined. Human Rights declared in 1789 were born with gender, discriminating women for being women.

After World War II, when humanity viewed the genocide it was capable of, all nations proclaimed in 1948 the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, acknowledging for the first time equal rights to men and women and a universal principle of no discrimination due to race, color, gender, language, religion, political opinion or of any other origin, nationality, social status, economic position, place of birth or any other condition.

The big paradox is that those are the same reasons for the greatest violations of Human Rights. Being an African immigrant I lose all my rights crossing the European border; I suffer cruel physical, psychological and sexual violence because of being a woman; being handicapped means I lose my right to accessibility, thus all my other rights are limited; if I am not heterosexual I have limited opportunities; being indigenous my citizenship is of a second or third category; if I am poor my rights are seen as favours or concessions from the powerful; and so on.

Hence, specific human rights are issued for the more discriminated social sectors, for example: Convention to eliminate all forms of discrimination against women (1979); Convention about the rights of children (1989); Convention to prevent and eradicate violence against women (1994); Universal

Declaration of Sexual Rights (1997); Convention on the rights of immigrants (2008); Convention about the rights of handicapped persons (2006); Convention about the rights of the indigenous (2007).

But one thing is the formal declaration of rights and another one is a change in the patriarchal culture, capitalist economy of classes, individualism and neoliberal xenophobia, religious homophobia and legitimating connected theologies, which at this stage of globalisation have globalised the discriminating and excluding "democratic and legal" system imposed in practice.

There is a great distance between the law, the State and the people. This distance and the ignorance of the law and the institutions by the people, besides helplessness, is the matrix in which corruption and impunity grow, it is one of the marrows of violations to Human Rights. That distance also fosters immobility myths. For example: fear of juries as if the judicial system was enemy to the people and not their servant; low self-esteem citizenship before civil servants who humiliate us, as if we had to ask for favours from them instead of demanding our rights; the idea that if I do not have money I cannot claim my rights, when obstacles to access justice have more to do with judicial culture than money.

That distance transforms the laws to defend our rights into mere wet paper. It is not enough to proclaim the right to a job of a handicapped person in a wheelchair, when to make it effective the access to working places, adapted toilettes, furniture, adapted transport, etc. are not guaranteed.

How can this reality be transformed? Through a down-up revolution that we people, groups, communities, social sectors, so frequently violated, must carry out, armed with a militant organisation and a mature

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civic and critical conscience, permanent self-criticism, moral and values, the necessary technical and material resources, to take over massive actions in defence of our human rights in a global dimension.

The successful struggles which in the last 25 years have yielded fruits of recovered rights give us some clues for action:

- Massive legal literacy to identify which are our human rights related to our daily life and happiness; to own the laws that specifically regulate daily life; to own the way of denouncing violations; to know the meaning of democratic institutions and the rule of law for popular interests.

- Massive political exercise to develop legislative initiatives; study public budgets and have a say in their elaboration; introduce the genre and generation approach in public budgets; introduce inclusive public policies and not discriminating policies.

- Leave out fear to demand legally. Denounce and claim with citizenship self-esteem, with perseverance, in an organised way, with unwavering civic consciousness of struggle, making this a popular culture.

- Massively become fully aware that politicians and civil servants are our servants and paid by us through our taxes and that we can and should denounce any case of deficient service or corruption.

- Get organised to demand with the arms of the law our specific rights with concrete struggles. Among the most successful which combined the mentioned awareness and tools, we may mention: eradication of usury among people; limitation of usury in the micro-credit; grant title of property to spontaneous human settlements; generation of a popular culture of entry in the civil registry as the first "right to have rights"; generation of a culture of consumer claim; promotion of a women's culture to demand alimony for the children from irresponsible fathers and to denounce genre violence they suffer; systematic judicial claim for violations to labour and union rights in free zones and other activity sectors; elimination of architectonic and urbanistic barriers to the rights of accessibility to handicapped people and public policies of inclusion for them, and many more.

- Fight for laws limiting capital profit and change economic laws, towards a social economy.

- Massive exercise of a conscious and responsible consumption.

- Make alliance with legal services of and for the people and exercise belligerent social monitoring of public defenders and of access to justice.

- Systematic and popular analysis of the economic, political, social, patriarchal, religious, of genre diversity, of migrations, of the indigenous, of handicapped people, of people-trafficking situations, at local, national, international levels, from a standpoint of genre and generational.

- Rule out from mind and conscience the idea that government or the officer assisting the poor does that as "a favour" or "gives us something", so as to own what our rights are whenever we access goods and services to live in a dignified way.

To go building in this way new democratic, economic and political institutions, really participative ones, in which laws and public budgets, institutions, police and army support a true state of human rights to guarantee:

freedom of the people and their free mobility above freedom of capital and their speculative circulation; the same responsibility of men and women for housework and care that all society needs; life of women over the impunity of aggressors; commerce of the same over multinational oligopolies; same treatment to heterosexuals, homosexuals, bisexuals or any other sexual orientations in the diverse creation; same opportunities to all rejecting privileges; life of ecosystems above the interests of predatory multinationals; finally, a solid and alternative legal state for human rights.

Human Rights are a potent tool of social struggle if we gain awareness and fight for their generalised respect and their massive exercise, without discrimination, building a new democratic institution which is a pending but already under way revolution. In Nicaragua we are developing, as in other places, under our rooted customs:

Only the people saves the people.

Right not defended is right lost.

And to defend it, you need to know it.

We do not ask for favours, we demand.

GOOD DRINKING WATER - LATINAMERICA'S HUMAN RIGHT - NOW!

VÍCTOR VIÑUALES

Zaragoza, Spain

It took the international community 62 years to realize that having good water and sanitation is a human right. When the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was signed in 1948, this condition was not even considered a human right. When in the year 2010, it was promoted by the government of Bolivia and supported by the governments of Germany and Spain besides many worldwide social organizations, finally the United Nations corrected their error -- their tremendous mistake: now it recognizes that without good water and sanitation life as such languishes.

Why did we take so long? How blind could we have been not to recognize that access to good water, is the "foundational right" for everything else? How can we accept that in this age of Google there are **more than 884 million people without access to safe water and over 2.6 billion who lack access to basic sanitation?** Without good water it is very difficult to exercise the freedom of expression, or of association ... because the days are filled with diarrhea, parasites -- the "alternate death".

The UN has added statistics highlighting this right: people need daily between 50 and 100 liters of water to meet their basic needs, and the cost of this access should not exceed 3% of the household income (today in many suburbs of Jakarta or Nairobi the poor pay 5 to 10 times more for water than those living in higher income areas); the time for collecting water should not exceed 30 minutes, nor the source of supply more distant than 1,000 meters.

Without water there is no education. More than 443 million school days are lost in the world of the impoverished because young girls spend hours and days going back and forth with buckets of water on the head or hip. The urgent need for water turns other priorities into dispensable "luxuries".

"No water" means, **no decent economic development.** Restaurants located in a population without drinking water become sources of contamination, and repel instead of attract tourists. There can be no economic agri-alimentary activity without assuring access to drinking water.

Without decent water life as a whole is filled with thorns. Many young people, for example, are violated coming and going from home to water sources. Women in Africa and Asia go an average of 6 km. to collect water.

Many people have the idea that if there are persons without access to water in a country it's a sign of poverty. That's only a half truth. There are countries like Pakistan, with economic resources to make atomic bombs, but unable to ensure access to safe water and sanitation to the entire population. That nations ought to make possible the human right to drinking water -- is "a mere priority" in public policy.

But this low priority is not just for governments. Often the population itself does not demand it with justified vehemence but instead favors other claims that are less foundational ... Result: the blindness of rulers and the ruled stroll together as the path of stupidity in public policy stretches far ahead.

This recognition of the importance of sanitation, is really a moral imperative. Those who live up-river often show little empathy for those living downstream. Either we come to feel personally the suffering of those who live far from us, or we will never improve the health of our rivers, and so logically, the access to good water for the population living downstream, which is the vast majority, will become more difficult .

It is quite common that the mayors of towns want to provide access to drinking water for their fellow citizens, but it is also common that these same authorities forget sanitation for the same population. Their way of seeing it is that the beneficiaries would come to be other municipalities or other living things -- the fish. Neither one nor the other marks a ballot for this mayor, so..., sanitation comes to be the forgotten policy. The real beneficiaries do not cast a vote. They are not even consulted.

Another serious challenge in making effective the human right to water is the problem of **maintaining the new infrastructure.** Public authorities and citizenry get enthralled by what they can see -- that

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which can be inaugurated -- be photographed -- the very visible concrete and pipes! This fascination with the works in many cases results in not giving sufficient importance to the "software" of water: that is, the financial administration of the services that have been created; the awareness and commitment to the community investment achieved; and capacitating the community to make efficient use of its water services.

Much infrastructure for access to drinking water or treatment of wastewater, after two years does not work! It comes to be a collective failure and waste of always scarce significant economic resources. Maintenance of infrastructure is a subject that sits well neither in Latin America nor in Spain -- nevertheless it is crucial.

Frequently great confusion is generated with respect to the sustainability of growth-supply services and sanitation. Sometimes simple speeches are heard saying: "if the water belongs to everybody, then it is a common good and also a human right -- it ought to be free". This is a grave error. Of course, the public authorities must guarantee that no one is deprived of access to basic water consumption due to lack of economic resources, but at the same time it is also necessary to ensure the **financial sustainability** of the water supply and sanitation facilities; if not, they will just run out and collapse. On the other hand, it is always necessary to establish rates that encourage rational and efficient use of water and sanctions for its abuse.

I always prefer to talk about "decent" good water, drinking water ... and qualify the water because it is not uncommon to come across installed water infrastructures that bring into the house a water not fit to drink! It is necessary to conduct a preliminary examination of the **quality of the water** to be accessed, and control the treatment of water provided to households. If this is not done correctly, we're not guaranteeing the human right to water -- we are just fooling ourselves and others.

Often governments do not guarantee access to safe drinking water for the population, and neither do companies that worry about their financial bot-

tom line. But the need to drink is imperative. So rural and suburban areas of Latin America are full of "community initiatives" -- self-organized, relying upon mutual help and community cooperation -- out collecting resources, papers and wills to achieve drinking water daily.

Sometimes the challenge is resolved well and the water is good, and the service sustainable for 24 hours a day and at a reasonable price... At other times contaminated water is distributed, or there are frequent cuts, or the final price is extravagant...

It is estimated that over 40 million people in Latin America resolve their water needs in some self-managed way. Many of these **Community Water Councils**, sometimes called "Water Committees", enjoy juridical personality and as such are recognized by authorities, and even share public resources. ... But others are off on their own -- disorganized, and with serious leadership problems. To make the human right to water effective, these **Boards and Committees** must play a fundamental role. They are natural "schools of democracy": -- the affected people must dialogue, debate options, make agreements, resolve internal conflicts, do strategic planning, make decisions... A spin off of this age-old struggle for water as a basic service, is that it facilitates organizational solidity and develops community leaders. Here is where women are committing themselves to leadership. The same qualities that come into play to manage the Community Water are those required to achieve self-propelled economic and social development!

Bolivia has set itself a series of goals to commemorate its Bicentennial Independence Anniversary. One goal is to achieve by that year, 2025, the effective implementation of the human right to water and sanitation. And we stress "effective" because our right to good water is not the same as just having water to drink. Latin American Countries would do well to follow the example of Bolivia and utilize their Bicentennial, or any other land-mark, to accept the challenge to achieve that right at a concrete time in their very near future. It's necessary, and by articulating forces and wills, IT IS POSSIBLE.!

MINING AND VIOLATIONS OF HUMAN RIGHTS

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Latin America is the largest source of metal ore in the world, at a time when there is a growing obsession with this natural resource throughout the world. If the current rhythm of consumption and extraction is maintained, the global reserves of iron will be exhausted in 41 years, those of aluminium in 48 years, and those of copper and zinc in 18 and 17 respectively.

At the same time, in the case of mining, it is the poor who are the principal victims of the violations of human rights.

1. Mining versus human rights

Mining has specific impacts not only on the territory near the mines. Every major project needs a massive infrastructure to support it: for the generation of energy, for the accumulation of water for rinsing and for the transport of the minerals or their elimination through railways or ports.

In Brazil, for example, the longest train in the world has 330 waggons snaking through 900 kilometres of railway, a concession to the Vale S.A., in order to export Amazon iron ore from Carajás to China, Japan and Europe. A railway line of the same size is being built between Mozambique and Malawi for the same company for the transportation of coal ore.

In Peru, the controversial Camisea gas pipeline is destined primarily for feeding the large mining projects in the south of the country. Along with the well-known project of the Conga mine that mobilized thousands of people in impressive demonstrations ("Conga no va!"), there is the hydroelectric project of Chadin, by Odebrecht, a Brazilian company, in an enormous swamp that will endanger the flow of the Marañon River, one of the major tributaries of the Amazon River. Many and diverse people and communities consider themselves affected by mining!

1.1 Mining and the right to a healthy environment

The most obvious impacts of mining are environmental: deforestation (Carajás, Brazil), accumulation of residues – Sandy Lake in Canada will disappear because of residue material that the mine is going to dump into it –, pollution generated by industries in the mining chain (for example, La Oroya in Peru and

Piquiá de Baixo or Santa Cruz in Brazil).

The extraction of gold is particularly striking, for example, in Pascua Lama (Chile-Argentina). In order to obtain a gram of gold, 4 tonnes of rock have to be removed, 380 litres of water used, 1 kilogram of explosive and almost the same amount of cyanide. The energy required to separate one gram of gold is the equivalent of the weekly consumption of water by an average Argentinian family.

Mining contaminates water (through acid drainage into the aquifers) and consumes large quantities of quality water. In Chile, for example, the large mining companies consume 13 cubic meters of water every second. This is the annual consumption of 6 million people!

1.2 Mining and the Right to a Home

In order to provide space for mining projects and their infrastructure, families or entire communities are often expelled from their territories. Rural and urban communities are sent away and resettled in conditions and contexts that are often worse than what they had before. For example, there is the case of the resettlements of Cateme and 25 Setembro in Mozambique to provide space for coal mines, El Hatillo, Plan Bonito y Boquerón in Colombia, also for coal projects) and of Piquiá de Baixo in Brazil. This latter is a rare case in that the community itself begged to be resettled because of their despair at being faced with the pollution to which they saw themselves condemned.

In spite of the fact that Convention 169 of the International Trade Organization recommends that indigenous and traditional communities should be consulted regarding their consent before the establishment of any productive activity on their territory, the process of prior consultation is inexistent or extremely precarious and intentionally ineffective in most countries of the region.

Indigenous communities are harmed by mining projects and their infrastructure. These projects lead to cutting trees, the flight of game animals, a loss of control of territories and reduction of their size. This is the case, for example, of the Shuar people in Ecuador or of the Awá-Guajá in Brazil.

Translation by Richard Renshaw

1.3 Mining and the Right to a Future

In the territories where they propose to become active, the mining industry puts in place real economies. Most of the initiatives turn toward the mining industry as an almost exclusive economic perspective. Both nationally and internationally this guarantees the interests of certain influential economic and political minorities. However, it very rarely allows people or communities in those territories to plan or diversify their investments or to become qualified for other activities such as family agriculture, micro-enterprises in other productive areas, etc.

The politics of regional development are defined beyond any possibility of participation by those who live in the area. This favours fiscal and financial incentives for activities linked to the mining industry and boycotts other visions and perspective.

This lack of alternatives plays out in favour of the mining companies. It generates a cheap work force that is increasingly dependent on them and is centralized, geographically and economically, around the mines. In this way they are permanently subjected.

Uninhibited migration toward the modern “El Dorados” in contexts of misery and absence of State presence give the impression of a false development. In reality, it is uncontrolled growth that provokes chaos and violence.

Marabá y Parauapebas, for example, are cities in the state of Pará (Brasil) closest to Carajás, the largest iron mine in the world. However, they are also among the most violent cities in Brazil. The probability that a young person might die in one of them through gun fire or a knifing is 25% higher than in Iraq.

1.4 Mining and the Right to Social Organization

Whoever criticizes the large mining complexes is exposed to judicial persecution, threats, calumnies, espionage and assassination. The data bank on mining conflicts in Latin America provides, in detail, 198 cases of current conflicts on the continent. They affect 297 communities. The attacks on social movements and communities are evident and public. In many cases, they constitute a strategic false dilemma between collective interest and the defense of human rights and nature.

Recently, militants of social movements in Brazil opposed to major mining projects have been spied upon and secret agents of the police and military as

well as private security forces have been infiltrating the coordination of those movements.

It is a short distance from espionage to persecution and to physical violence. We recall only a few of the most serious massacres like that of Bagua (Peru, in 2009 with dozens of disappeared indigenous people and 28 police assassinated), of the bridge of Maraga (Brazil, in 1987, with the death of various artisanal miners. There is that of El Dorado dos Carajas (in Brazil, 1996, carried out by the Brazilian Military Police and, it seems, supported by the mining company, Vale S.A., with a toll of 21 rural workers of the Landless Workers’ Movement dead).

1.5 Mining and the Rights of Women

Large scale mining is violence against gender. The impacts described above fall mainly on the lives of women. In many cases, they suffer the assassination or loss of their husbands and are then pressured to sell their lands to the mining companies. Physical aggression increases and also sexual exploitation in the mining regions or where major projects are established.

The plundering of family lands or those of entire communities is an attack above all against women who are, in many cases, those responsible for the health and food security of their households. The large projects tend (intentionally in many cases) to dismantle the social fabric of the communities. A context of projection and security is lost as is the possibility of participation.

2. Three Axes of Resistance:

- No to mining. This includes protests against large projects where the industry and its infrastructure are not yet established, blockages, demonstrations, judicial actions to have their illegality recognized, struggles for laws that would prohibit contaminating or uncontrolled mining, international campaigns – for example that of “Water is worth more than life,” which was supported by Pope Francis.

- Guarantees for rights (where installations are in place), including an appeal to institutions for the defense of collective rights, a struggle for mitigation and reparation of violated rights, attempts to slow down the expansion of the projects and to combine mining dynamics with other socio-economic activities.

- Post-extractive activities such as debates and long-term actions to promote a new model of life and a new economy.

HUMAN RIGHTS CENTERS: MISSION AND SERVICE

MIGUEL CONCHA MALO

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Latin America is characterized by both similarities and differences found within its territories. This region has often suffered from exploitation, authoritarian control and violence. However, during the last half of the past century, and well into the present, the people of Latin America have experienced a strong surge of solidarity from down under, which has led to their daily building historical mediations for the Kingdom of God.

We see key stages that allow us to identify this solidarity. The first glimpse was during the 70's and 80's, when social movements fought for the liberation of their people. At that time, dictatorships, especially military, were a continuing reality in the region. It was common to encounter constant denouncement of systematic disappearances, extrajudicial executions, torture, threats, persecution and exile and even states themselves being accused of violent regimes against their own people.

Then the Central American Region began to undergo momentous conflicts which, besides the above violations, caused entire communities to be evacuated, and thousands of refugees to be generated for Mexico and the USA, due to the violent political struggles through which they were passing. During this stage the *Socorro Jurídico Cristiano*, was founded in 1975 by the Jesuit Priest Segundo Montes. This later evolved into the *Socorro Jurídico* of the Archdiocese of San Salvador, and finally into the *Tutela Legal*, which played such a key role accompanying victims of political repression.

The third period necessarily is related to the struggle for political rights. Movements and organizations strove for strong institutions to consolidate and guarantee free elections of governments. In many cases the origin of these movements was the consequence of constant and obvious electoral frauds, and the efforts of a single political party to perpetuate itself in power or the frustration and disappointment generated in the population by the political class.

A fourth period consists in organizational work-

groups, collectives, communities and towns defending their specific rights as well as apposing the dictatorships of both capital and market. To this we can add the current struggle for recognition, respect, protection and guarantees by states for economic, social, cultural and environmental rights (ESCR) since now it is well known that large corporations grab onto the common natural goods of communities and peoples, in order to exploit and strip them for their own profit.

During all these liberating processes, spread out over more than five decades, groups and collectives have constituted specifically organized opportunities in the area of defense and promotion of human rights. And one of its principle commitments has been to weave links of solidarity between these different organizations, both national and international, which work for the cause of justice, while at the same time assuming the task of working from the base for peace and dignity for individuals, communities and the peoples of our region.

It follows that human rights organizations have arisen from different experiences. Some sprung up inspired by the Gospel of Jesus through the Catholic Church; some were spawned by other Christian Churches with strong ecumenical convictions. All were framed within the commitment of the Latin American Churches in their option for the poor, and the conviction that pursuit of justice is required for following Jesus. In addition, there are many other processes by various civil society organizations all rooted in liberation struggles. It is worthwhile pointing out that whatever their origin and inspiration, it did not prevent their working conjointly to promote and defend human right cases and causes such as the fight against torture, poverty, environmental degradation, corruption, impunity and the criminalization of social protest. Instead, defending human rights grew into a rich mosaic of experiences and knowledge all aimed at liberation.

It is important to emphasize the participation of bishops, priests and pastors in the conformation of

Translation by Justiniano Liebl

these civil human rights organizations. Some with just their example were a source of inspiration.

Other promoted, fostered, supported or accompanied these centers. Outstanding among others were Oscar Romero, Juan Gerardi, Leonidas Proaño, Samuel Ruiz, Sergio Méndez Arceo, Pedro Casaldáliga, José María Pires, Tomás Balduino and Hélder Câmara.

During all this time, the Human Rights Organizations had experienced both a quantitative and qualitative growth. They had become more professional in their jobs, with greater awareness of the economic, political, legal and cultural context in which they operated. They had perfected their analysis of the internal and external causes that made possible in their countries and regions these Human Rights violations. They continually articulated and increasingly developed their specific actions, in conjunction with the struggle of movements that claimed Human Rights as their perspective of public policy and structural change. They worked up legislative changes including ones that were constitutional and nationwide. In general they stood out for project proposals for legal, political, economic and administrative changes to insure the protection of Human Rights. They made possible the adoption of international instruments and mechanisms for the protection of Human Rights, as has been the case of the Inter-American Convention on the Forced Disappearance of Persons, which could never have been possible without the active participation of civil society.

Thanks to their work of promoting such groups, these organizations have multiplied for having increased their activities of Human Rights education involved in documenting cases, as also in constructing methods for accompanying victims together with trustworthy information as a fund of reliable material witnessing to the structural violence to which persons and peoples are submitted.

These HR Centers differ given the diverse rights to which they devote their activities. There are those who promote and defend civil and political rights, while others economic, social, cultural and environmental rights. Others specialize in defending the Human Rights of different population groups such as: women, children, indigenous communities, migrants, journalists, etc. There exists an ample conviction that Human Rights, besides being universal, are also in

themselves integral, indivisible and inter-dependent. These organizations have been characterized primarily for offering an integral accompaniment in the process of conscience-raising regarding the oppression involved in the struggle for freedom from injustice.

We consider as out-standing among the centers that have operated throughout Latin America: *Servicio Paz y Justicia*, present in twelve countries of the region. In Argentina we have the *Asociación Madres de Plaza de Mayo*; in Colombia, the *Centro de Investigación y Educación Popular*; in Perú, the *Coordinadora Nacional de DDHH*, -- consisting of a network of 81 social organizations defending Human Rights. En México we have the *Red Nacional de Organismos Civiles de DDHH «Todos los Derechos para Todas y Todos»*, which networks with 74 organizaciones of the country, and to which belongs the *«Centro de DDHH Fray Francisco de Vitoria OP»*. All these organizations and more, are consistently defending Human Rights by consulting, accompanying strategic processes and reporting violations to the Human Rights of individuals and peoples.

People can come with confidence and hope to any of these venues for dignified sharing and articulation. Here they receive attentive listening and strategic orientation, both legal and political, related to the restitution of their rights that have been violated. These are organizations that seek to walk daily with people -- with "those excluded". In short, they are "signs of the Kingdom", "salt and light" for the world.

A Center for Human Rights in Latin America means a space where collective efforts are intertwined to defend the dignity of persons and peoples, and pursue justice and peace. It means a place from which arises an indignant voice against abuse of power, a voice that is accompanied with solidarity for groups that have been historically marginalized and discriminated. It places its hope on transforming a de-humanizing structure and working for "that other possible world". Their activity has no meaning apart from proximity and horizontal dialogue with people and groups, sharing and exchanging experiences that benefit the construction of social subjects of rights. These advocacy organizations have been the instrument of hope and solidarity, from which alternative proposals are being generated to meet the deep crisis of civilization in which we are immersed.

RELIGIONS HUMAN RIGHTS: HISTORICAL LITIGATION

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Religions have never got on well with human rights. They have both been in permanent conflict. Precisely, the attitude of religions towards human rights is today one of the decisive criteria to acknowledge its social relevance or irrelevance, its acceptance or rejection in society.

In this article I will analyse first the difficulties and problems of religions with the theory and practice of human rights, so as to show what religions can provide to human rights from the testimony and message of some of their leaders.

Pessimistic anthropology. Religions tend to consider human beings as dependent on their creator, without autonomy in their way of being, thinking and acting. The person is a sinner to the eyes of God and needs redemption. The image religions have of the human being is usually pessimistic and negative. The human being can seldom be bearer of dignity and subject of rights.

On the contrary, he is bearer of duties and obligations, expressed in the different religious codes as prohibition and punishments, not only temporal, but also eternal. For religions to recognise human being as bearers of rights there must be a change in the anthropological concept. If not, they will stay in the antipodes of the paradigm of human rights.

Fundamentalism. Religious fundamentalism opposes divine right to human rights and recognises the divine right to have: a) superiority, as revealed by God; b) immutability because of its divine origin; c) plenitude, because it possesses all what is necessary to obtain its objectives; d) universality, since revelation is universal.

Ranking of human beings according to their beliefs. Religions tend to establish differences among human beings based on their beliefs; differences that, finally, end up in inequality and generate discrimination and exclusion processes.

There is a distinction between believers of one religion and believers of other religions. The first are

considered chosen by God and enjoy all the privileges that the divinity keeps for his faithful. The members of other religions are considered inferior and object of punishment. The differences are greater still between believers and non-believers, up to the point of asserting that they are found in error and therefore cannot be subjects of rights, according to the Augustinian logic: "error has no rights".

Another tendency is to establish **rigid hierarchies** within religions among authorities, who claim to represent God and the believers who must submissively obey and scrupulously enact the directions from above. The first enjoy all rights; for the second there are only duties.

Institutional conflicts. At an institutional level, there are permanent conflicts between parliament and religious authorities, who consider certain moral principles unchangeable that, according to their judgment, belong to the natural law. Religious authorities usually oppose laws about divorce, voluntary interruption of pregnancy, homosexual marriage, research with embryonic stem cells, and at the same time they do not accept the legitimacy of the representatives of the people to legislate over these issues.

Human rights transgression within religions. Religions are reluctant to recognise and defend sexual and reproductive rights and to practise human rights in their midst, alleging that they must obey precepts from their sacred texts, that express God's will, and do not have to obey any human declaration of rights.

The greatest difficulty for religions towards human rights lies in **their own organisation**, which is not democratic, but **hierarchical-pyramidal**, up to the point of permanently trespassing human rights within, claiming, as in the case of the Catholic Church, that

- a) it is a divine institution,
- b) it works in the spiritual terrain, and not the political and
- c) its functioning is not comparable to other civil institutions. I ask: how can God wish for democracy

Translation by Alice Méndez

and human rights in society but not within religious institutions?

Religious leaders in defence of human rights.

But this is just one side of religions. There is another one in defence of the rights of the poor and excluded by neoliberal globalisation and of all those persons and communities marginalised because of genre, religion, race, culture, social class, sexual orientation, etc. Not a few of those who work in the defence of human rights and social justice in the world belong to different religious and spiritual traditions, and frequently they base their struggle on their religious beliefs.

In **Christianity** there are various personalities.

Luther King assumed a non-violent resistance against racial discrimination and the defence of their civil rights. He led the march of 29 August 1963 to Washington, where he pronounced his emblematic speech “I have a dream”, where he called to fight for justice and for all the rights of human beings and against the state of poverty in which black people lived. In 1968 he was assassinated.

For **Desmond Tutu** the basis of egalitarianism in the Bible lies in the idea that all belongs to God and all human beings have the same dignity. Based on this principle he fought against apartheid and for equal rights of whites and blacks in South Africa.

Monseñor Romero denounced the abuses of the government of El Salvador who legitimised violence up to the point of turning it into one of the pillars of the State and kept the popular majorities in a chronic situation of structural poverty. He condemned the death squadrons, the army and governors (Catholics) for the repression against the peasantry. He defended a change of structures that would allow a better division of wealth and made permanent calls to reconciliation. On 24 March 1980 he was assassinated.

Ignacio Ellacuría was one of the main theorists of human rights within the liberation theology and one of its most compromised defenders in El Salvador. Human rights are due to every person and are required because of the real wholeness of the human. The recognition or lack of it greatly conditions the development of each individual. They exist and are defended within the integral liberation of the popular

majorities. He died, assassinated, with his comrades and two women in 1989.

In **Islam** there are various religious leaders compromised with the defence of human rights from within the Muslim faith. **Muhammad Jatami**, president of the Islamic Republic of Iran (1997-2005) claims for a dialogue of civilizations and considers human rights one of the major achievements of the present world, that democracy has no meaning without their recognition and that religious and cultural values must be respected. In the defence of human rights, specially of women, **Fatima Mernissi** and **Shirin Ebadi** must be mentioned: the first, due to her historical investigations about the origin of misogyny in Islam and her criticism of discrimination of women in the Muslim world; the second, for her compromise with human rights, mainly of children, and for liberation of women in Iran from within Islam.

Among the **Hindi tradition** **Gandhi** outstands, who defended human rights through a civic resistance and active non-violence having as a base for his struggle the duty to and faith in God. The obedience to divine law demands resisting unjust laws. Protection of human rights is, for him, inseparable of the protection of nature and animal rights. He was assassinated in 1948.

The old tradition of hospitality and protection of the widow, the orphan and the foreigner is still alive today in **Judaism** and is expressed through movements that fight against the ideology and discriminates based on the “chosen people” and the “promised land”, and Jewish women that lead the fight for their emancipation in the feminist movement.

Buddhism has movements and people who reformulate their ethical principles based on human rights, following the tradition of the Buddha, who defended the equality of all human beings and opposed the stratification of society in casts. Two brilliant examples are the Vietnamese monk **Thich Nhat Hanh**, who sensitizes his followers in the conscience of fraternity and the Dalai Lama, one of the principal world referents in the work for peace and inter-religious dialogue.

HUMAN RIGHTS WITHIN THE CHURCH ITSELF

ARMANDO LAMPE

Aruba, Antillas Menores

“Before criticizing someone else, start by criticizing oneself” said Mother Teresa of Calcutta. This is why we are not referring to some glorious chapters of the Latin American Church, of denunciation and defence of human rights, such as the Vicariate of Santiago de Chile or the pastoral work of Archbishop Romero, but rather to the human rights situation within the Church itself. Human rights constitute a problem that the Catholic Church has not yet resolved from within.

The term “human rights” (HRs) refers back to the last 60 years since the “Universal Declaration of Human Rights”. It was only since 1948 that for the first time in the history of mankind, people have accepted that all human beings have the same dignity and rights. This idea did not fall from heaven, and the contribution of Christianity to the formation of this idea was undoubtedly significant. When Paul of Tarso proclaimed that in the Christian community there is no difference between Greek and Roman, male or female, and slave or freeman, and when Bartolome de Las Casas faced with the exclusion of the indigenous proclaimed that humanity is one, they show that the idea of human rights is deeply rooted in Christian tradition.

However, at the same time we must recognize the distinction between Christianity and the Church. I am not referring to the criminal history of intolerance in the Church as for example the Inquisition, so vivid during the colonial history of Latin America, because it would be an anachronism, to apply an idea of the past half century to previous centuries. Nor can I deny the fact that even in the second half of the 19th century bishops and priests were owners of African slaves in the Caribbean. They were responsible for buying and selling human beings. In that same era, Pope Pio IX published the Syllabus, which condemned all rights emerged from the French Revolution such as the right of workers to become members of a union or the freedom of expression. Yet I am not

referring to any of these. I am talking about contemporary history where you can say that between the Church and human rights there is a contradiction as evidenced in the following cases.

The Holy See is one of the States least committed to the cause of the defence of human rights worldwide. There have been over 100 international conventions on human rights in the United Nations that have been both general and specific conventions. Of all these international conventions on human rights, the Holy See has signed only 10, appearing to have complied by giving “tithes” to human rights. The Holy See is near the bottom of the list of States worldwide as regards to public commitment of an international character for the defence of human rights.

In general, the Vatican as an associate State to the United Nations, has not signed the international Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights, as well as the Covenant of Civil and Political Rights, which were approved at the General Assembly of the UN in 1966. These two Covenants and the 1948 Declaration became a legal body, mandatory for Signatory States. On a specific level, the Holy See has not ratified any of the conventions on the elimination of discrimination based on sexuality, education, employment and profession. Nor have they ratified those relative to the protection of indigenous peoples, the rights of workers, the rights of women, and the protection of family and of marriage.

After more than 60 years since the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Catholic Church has not yet accepted human rights, which are considered one of the biggest achievements in the moral history of mankind. It has not accepted them as a State, the State of the Vatican City, nor as a religious organization, since it has not accepted the rights of persons within its organization. For example, in 1990 the Congregation for the Doctrine of Faith issued a document (Instruction on the Ecclesial Vocation of

Translation by Betty Sheppard


the Theologian) where in #36 it states, "You cannot appeal to human rights to oppose the interventions of the Magisterium". It can be argued that there is the Code of Canon Law which speaks of rights and duties of the faithful, but it is a dead letter, because the faithful cannot sue in court but only depend on the goodwill of the ecclesiastical authorities. In the Church there is no democracy and separation of powers because all power is concentrated on the Pope (canons 331, 333, 1404 and 1372). The Catholic Church is the last remaining absolute monarchy in Europe, who violates hundreds of rights of its own members.

To name a few: their concept of family and marriage, which carries difficulties with feminist movements and especially homosexuals; their concept of family planning and reproduction, by which it has confronted a lot of States within the UN and international organizations; the refusal to separate celibacy and priesthood, maintaining authoritarian organizational structures, and the discrimination of women in the Church by denying priestly ordination.

One problem is if the Church can impose restrictions on rights to its members, i.e. rights under civil law. I have experienced this first-hand: when I was elected as a representative for the lower house in my country, the Vatican demanded my resignation as priest and I was finally secularised in 2013. As a citizen I have active and passive voting rights; thus, my rights were infringed by the Church but I have nowhere or whom to turn to demand any rights. The Church is increasingly having more problems concerning the violation of human rights within itself and grievances of its members are more numerous each year. The violation of human rights inside the Church has implications outside; the problem of sexual abuse of minors by many priests is an international scandal. The Church has earned the shameful record of being one of the institutions that has less championed the rights of children (all minors under 18, according to the first article of the Convention on the Rights of the Child).

However, the Vatican still makes recommendations to the States in the UN, as in March 2014, to Mexico,

urging the country to "preserve and protect the natural institution of the family and marriage as the marital union between a man and a woman based on free consent". It is nothing more than a family pattern which is in permanent conflict with other interpretations and even other human rights including the right of homosexuals to have a family. The Vatican itself should respect those human rights it asks other States to implement.

Pope Francis may have the best intentions in the world as a person, but as a Pope he has no moral authority to demand the enforcement of human rights while inside the Church not all human rights are admitted or scrupulously respected. While human rights continue to be violated by ecclesiastical institutions, many Christians will continue to blush, but at the same time we will do everything possible to form a Church that leads through example regarding the respect for human rights. 

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THE RIGHT TO LIVE IN PEACE - AN ANTIMILITARIST COMMITMENT

ELÍAS RUIZ VIRTUS

San Pedro Sula, Honduras

I live with "down and outers", so I see everything through their eyes and I write just what I see.

I see continual cruel murders but not done by "extra-terrestres". We are the ones who slaughter one another. It's our young people who kill and who get killed. They get together in street-gangs, "maras". Opposing gangs are of the same social status, share the same misery, have gone to the same school and live on adjacent streets. One day our street puts up a couple deaths and in a few days our kids kill on the adjacent street -- so scores get evened up. We have nothing to begin with and we rob from each other. We steal bread from the hungry. The girl carrying her 15 day wage from slaving in a sweatshop is assaulted and robbed. The "mara" imposes extortions -- "taxes" on the local "Mom and Pop Stores" that sell rice and Coca Cola to their neighbors with whom they share the same miserable living conditions, the same difficulties "to eat to keep alive", the same lack of schools and recreational spaces, lack of decent drinking water, health care and jobs.

We're not living. This is not "peace".

Paulo Freire, in his "Pedagogy of the Oppressed", tells us that things get to be so bad **having lost our way** because we imitate a **bad model**. The oppressor lays out for himself an underworld steeped in blatant inhumanity and then gives it off as the only possible model for everybody. The oppressed goes along with this model and aspires to resemble the oppressor, assuming for himself the impossible and perverse task of imitating the rich. For the oppressed person, the first step toward life must be to reject this defective proposed model which he/she has accepted and aspires to reach.

Freire's proposal must be broadened out so that societies become the protagonists. This flawed model is the western style of life -- "financially" embodied in capitalism and exacerbated by the neo-liberal capitalism of recent decades: to dominate, to have more than the other at the expense of others and of our Mother the Planet Earth. We are familiar with the image of Mother Earth shedding tears. We humans have morphed into a cancer, a tumor that grows outside the environment of which we are part but brings about suicide and death to its close relatives. This diseased

model is what has brought us to where we are today and it must be wiped off our horizon.

An incredible **inequity** in living has set in for our going in the wrong direction. A small group of privileged people holds nearly 90% of all assets. About 80% of the population, must get-by living on the 10% "left-overs". The United Nations Program for Development in 1994 symbolized this data by a "Champagne Goblet" that has to be smashed. Since then, instead of diminishing, this inequity has increased. Last year's "*Agenda LatinoAmericana*" focused on: "A Different Economy is Possible." It proposed to counter "an economy of hoarding", by "an economy of distributing" -- Hoarding engenders labor strikes, unemployment, impoverishment, resentment, desperation, class warfare and even worse evils such as blindness to reality, unsympathetic hearts, and living in plush prisons. Inequity has never been so great as it is today, neither so widespread nor so profound.

How to liberate ourselves from this? We have one path: **conscience raising**. Karl Marx wrote: "unjust structures are maintained by: 1) lack of consciousness in the underdogs; 2) connivance of ideological powers such as schools and churches; 3) repressive structures such as police and army." To the mid-day clarity pictured by the "Champagne Goblet" of the UNDP we must now also add this lightning bolt by Karl Marx.

Let's open the eyes of the underdogs. We are "the majority"! For the good of everybody, let's smash the Goblet. We who are part of a school system or religious network -- let's open eyes -- first our own and then those of the underdogs with whom we live. And since we in no way form part of the upper-crust minority let's not get seduced by its apparent benefits.

Instead of being the *opium of the people*, we must be "the alarm siren of the people". We are not here to channel shoddy goods from those above in order to lull the masses below. Freire put it this way: "The source of such benefits gush out water that is contaminated by sweat, tears, blood and death of those below".

Let's analyze, with the detention that these few lines permit, the presence of **repressive forces** re-

* Véase la *Agenda Latinoamericana* '1994'; puede recogerse en latinoamericana.org/digital

ferred to by Marx. They are the most visible forces for maintaining the juggling act of balancing the “Champagne Goblet”.

The ideological support (schools and churches) though regrettable, nevertheless is necessary and open to re-orientation: it must function to raise conscience and not permit itself to become the opium of the people. Education must be liberating, and religion must also be of and for liberation. On the other hand, the repressive forces can never be re-orientated; they are very expensive, useless, easily abused structures whose sole purpose is to maintain an unjust order. They have no reason to exist in a society that functions well.

Every year the world squanders astronomical amounts on weapons and in favor of those who use them: a trillion dollars -- which like “light-years” is beyond our capacity to imagine. Just the US of North America spends 600 thousand million dollars per year. With \$19 thousand million, we can abolish world-wide hunger; with \$13 thousand million we can achieve universal education; \$9 thousand million can assure universal drinking water, and we would still have huge amounts left over for health, and housing ... Summing up all these basic global needs we reach the \$50 thousand million mark – this is a trifle more than 8% of the USA annual military budget.

How is it possible that the USA military structure together with its “brains” can squander \$600 thousand million just to defend the privileges of a minority? And the worst of it is, that all the military structures of the rest of the world tread the same path.

Over the past 10 years Latin America increased military spending by 50%. Last year Central America and Mexico, increased military spending by 7%. Military spending produces neither jobs, nor growth, nor distribution, much less social well-being.

Instead of security it produces fear. **Equity** generates security, fulfills basic needs and insures that governments seriously promote universal justice and good living, the *Buen Vivir*. The arms race is absurd.

Let’s get back to listening to **people whose wisdom we respect**. What do they tell us about arms? “Arms are made for destruction and wise men avoid them” (Lao Tse). Rather go hungry than make a living by a gun. The military profession must be regarded as the chief profession to be abolished. Another poet and sage, the Prophet Isaiah, foresaw a world without

weapons: “Today begins a new era: arms get turned into pruning hooks; spears get transformed into plowshares and the oppressed get liberated”. These verses should become our cradle song and be repeated continually as our mantra. We must go along with the behavior of Gandhi and Martin Luther King Jr. -- living an “active non-violence”. They never touched a weapon and still they changed the world. Victor Jara’s “The Right to Live in Peace” was the last song he wrote shortly before he was murdered by Pinochet.

Let’s recover our dream of *life without weapons*, and our “earth without military barracks”. Let’s dream of those large empty spaces suddenly being converted into gardens, parks, schools and living centers. Let’s dream of those people liberated from weapons, now as gardeners, teachers, musicians, nurses ... and those immense financial resources diverted from serving death, now applied to resolve the tremendous needs of all humanity. Today all this is possible.

Military people: take note whom we are indicating. All of you are also “those down below”. “Don’t shoot your brothers and sisters” begged and commanded Saint Romero of the Americas. Much less shoot at those above. It’s sufficient just to stop sustaining them there above. They will collapse under their own weight.

Running after “The American Dream”, or latching on to “European high-life”, are nefarious deceptions leading to collision against a solid wall. Let’s inject happiness instead of this worthless style. Our national artists do this with songs like that of Facundo Cabral : “My boss thinks that I’m the one who is poor!”; or the song of Victor Jara: “The up-town houses with barred windows, front lawns, and a beautiful driveway ... “. Or we can simply refer to Coca-cola as “sewage from the empire” -- as a symbol of an empty life. This is what Ricardo Arjona does in “If the North were the South ...” when he ridicules “the privileges of the North with their MacDonalds and rock’n roll”.

Such a change will lead us to both “Living Well” and “Living Together Well”. This was the theme of our “Agenda LatinoAmericana” for the year 2012. Let’s restore “people-harmony”, a living harmony within our human context and in joyful communion with our dear Mother Earth— as also with the cosmos of which we are part and parcel and with that Ultimate Mystery whence we came, and through which we exist now and forever.



PEDAGOGICAL CHALLENGES TO THE HUMAN RIGHTS

FREI BETTO

São Paulo, SP, Brazil

When finishing a conference delivered in Italy, a hand went up among the audience: "How do you fight for human rights in Latin America?"

I started thinking. Human Rights in Latin America? A luxury! Here we have not even conquered animal rights, like being protected from cold and heat, eating, drinking and educating our children. In various parts of the continent many children do not even know if there is a future for them, nor if it will be one of pain or unhappiness.

Human Rights: that is an expression that has become a curse for many public authorities. Goebbels, Hitler's minister, took out his pistol whenever he heard the word culture. In Latin America, many would like to react in just the same way when listening to "human rights". They consider it to be a defence for bandits. It is not. It is doing what Jesus did: defend the right of everyone to life and to the goods of life.

To defend human rights is to fight for food, health, education, housing, work and leisure time for everyone. That is enough to be happy. As long as the heart is free from excessive ambitions.

The police should be the first to respect Human Rights. They exist in order to defend the population. They are paid by our taxes. But governors do not request from police schools to teach human rights to its students. They turn a blind eye before torture and the summary disposal of suspects and criminals. Justice rarely condemns bad policemen. In some countries, like Brazil, military policemen accused of offenses are judged by special courts, or better still, are "judged" by comrades who, almost always, put corporate complicity above the requirements of the law. Thereby, the escalating of violence is broadened, and the "culture" of an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth. But, vengeance sows justice just like gasoline puts out fire...

According to Amnesty International, still today, in more than one hundred countries, prisoners are tortured. Not only does the USA practise this, but president Obama is not ashamed of publicly defend-

ing "harsh methods" applied to suspects of terrorism, what explains –although it does not justify it–, the maintenance of the naval base in Guantanamo, Cuba, turned into an illegal and horrible prison for men kidnapped throughout the world under the accusation of being virtual terrorists.

In many Latin American countries, frequently, the police turn a raid into a slaughter; poor prisoners are abused in police stations; women are violated by law agents; defenders of Human Rights suffer threats and attacks, and many times are assassinated; and those who commit those offenses enjoy impunity and immunity.

Today we in a paradox, we make popular the subject of Human Rights and at the same time we face terrible violations to those same rights, now transmitted live, through satellite. What frequently worries and frightens institutions and authorities –governments, police, troops destined to peace missions, etc.– whose legal function is to care for the dissemination and effective respect of Human Rights.

There has been some progress in our continent in the last years. The Inter-American Commission for Human Rights in the OAS has investigated complaints, and some governments have created institutions such as the National Secretariat for Human Rights in Brazil, whose Congress qualified torture as a shameful crime. Nevertheless, there is still a big gap between constitutional structures defending Human Rights and the permanent abuses, as well as an absence of safeguards and resources to ensure those rights in areas inhabited by peasants, indigenous, "quilombolas" and, in cities, among the communities of street dwellers, classifiers of recyclables and sex professionals.

Education in Human Rights

In the absence of a systematic programme of education in Human Rights in most of the signing countries, the Universal Declaration favours the consideration of torture as a violation to this but not the aggression to the environment; theft but not the

Translation by Alice Méndez

state of poverty of millions of people; censorship but not foreign intervention in sovereign countries; lack of respect to property, but not concealment of the right to property of the majority of the population.

In Latin America, the range of disrespect for Human Rights goes from the forests of Guatemala to the Peruvian plateaus; from the United States blockage to Cuba, to the neoliberal economic policies which protect the primary surplus and the profit of private banks, ignoring the tragedy of the street children and the millions of illiterate.

For the Gospel, every life is sacred. Jesus placed himself in the shoes of those who felt violated in their rights when he said he was hungry, thirsty, oppressed, etc. (Mt 25, 31-46)

A Human Rights educational programme must promote, above all, the qualifications of teachers, both persons and institutions –ONGs, Churches, governments, schools, the police and military forces, unions, social movements....-

In many countries the law guarantees the inalienable Rights of everyone, without distinctions between the rich and the poor, but is confined to a mere legal formality, not ensuring a fair and dignified life to all the population. There is little help from political Constitutions proclaiming that all have the same right to live, if the material means to make this possible is not guaranteed.

Fundamental rights cannot be restricted to the individual rights enunciated by the bourgeois revolutions of the XVIII century. Freedom is not individual contracts which consecrate the right to property and allow the owner to have “free initiative” to expand his profits at the cost of the exploitation of others.

In a world battered by the poverty of more than half its population, the State cannot conceive itself as a mere referee in society, but it must intervene to ensure social, economic and cultural rights for everybody. The recognition of a right inherent to the human being is not enough to ensure its effectiveness in the life of those who occupy a subordinate position in the social structure.

There are rights of a social, economic and cultural nature –such as work, strike, health, free education, job stability, dignified housing, leisure, etc.- that depend, for their effectiveness, on political and administrative actions from the State. In this respect,

personal and collective rights to political action and organisation represent today the possibility of a really democratic State.

In Latin America, there is a saying in pedagogy that we make a distinction between the Piaget methodology and the Pinochet methodology... The meaning of this is that educational methods are not always really pedagogical. Sometimes they are oppressive, they inhibit potentialities, they repress creativity and turn students into cowards before the reality of life.

This is true for a society that pretends to ensure the respect for Human Rights. Initially, these must be imposed by the force of a law. But this is not enough, as experience shows. In most countries that signed the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, those rights, though present in the words of the law, are still not respected. Torture, media censorship, invasion of personal privacy, racial and social discrimination, the death penalty, etc. are present. Therefore, the objective aspect of a legislation ensuring human rights needs to be complemented by a subjective aspect: education on Human Rights so they become a cultural consensus rooted in the feelings and acting of the people. This education must prioritise above all that people have, as professional duty, the obligation to ensure full respect of Human Rights.

All pedagogies aiming at converting students in social and historical subjects must be characterised by an acute critical sense. The articles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights cannot be adopted as divine oracles, ideologically impartial and immune to corrections and perfecting. They reflect a cultural vision of the cosmos conditioned by the predominant values of the post war West. They have much of utopia, far from reality. Therefore, the importance of a pedagogy for Human Rights that starts directly from the debate of the UN document.

For example, article I says: “all men are born free and equal in dignity and rights”. Today, we would say: men and women. The fact is that men and women are born dependent. As mammals, we cannot dispense with the care of our fellows during the first years of life. And we are far from being born the same in dignity and rights, enough to check the situation of women in countries of the East, of the indigenous in Latin America, of refugees in countries of Africa or of migrants in countries of West Europe.

A constructive criticism of the Universal Declaration would not only improve the UN Document, but also modify the present laws and the awareness of the authorities responsible for its application, from the President to the policeman at the corner, from the prime minister to the neighbourhood policeman.

To teach for Human Rights is to look for a cultural consensus that would inhibit any menace to a person's rights, individual or social. It is essential to talk about the right to participate in political and economic decisions; the right to control the war sector of our nations; the right to a healthy and happy infancy; the right to preserve good fame before the abuses of the media and even the right to a sound programming in them.

A delicate matter is how to politicise education of human rights without falling into partisanship. Human Rights have a political character, since they refer to social coexistence. But as universal rights they must be settled and respected within the principle –which is as well a right– of self-determination of the peoples. They should not be used as a means of imposing our political model on other people, nor as an instrument of neo-colonialism, what would be, at least, a paradox. Such rights must be respected both in monarchical and republican regimes, in presidential or parliamentary regimes, in capitalism or in socialism.

Therefore, it is necessary to start talking about Human Rights and the rights of the peoples as a right to independence, to choose their own political regime, to enjoy the environment, not to be colonised nor exploited by nations, organisations or foreign companies.

No right will be ensured if, first, no guarantees are offered to the fundamental right: the right to live. Not only the right to be born, but also to live in freedom and dignity, which presupposes, at least, that the trio food – health – education are socially guaranteed.

Pedagogical challenges

How can an education for Human Rights be implemented? What pedagogy to adopt? We live in a plural world, where globalisation is mentioned while fanatical sects and neoNazi movements add fuel to the fire of xenophobia. Some applaud the falling of the Berlin Wall, while others denounce the growing inequality


between North and South, that builds further the wall of social segregation. There are some who proclaim the “end of history” next to others who rescue libertarian utopias. Under the crisis of paradigms, modern reason sees the growing appearance of esoteric movements; some prefer astrology, tarot and I Ching to the analysis of situation and the strategic prospects.

In that context of paradigmatic fragmentation, to talk of Human Rights and the rights of the peoples becomes a basic assumption of an education which tries to modify the relationships among people and groups, within the ethics of tolerance and respect for the different. This does not mean administering an anarchical society: group rights, ethnical and collective, must be in harmony with individual rights, so that the defence of these represent the consolidation of the others. Otherwise, we will be able to admit the right of the serenade singer to bother the sleep of neighbours in the early hours; the right of the landowner to increase his lands invading an indigenous reserve; and the right of a nation to impose its economic model on another one.

Hence, rights should not be mistaken for privileges, nor should we admit material profit to be above the indelible sacredness of human life.

This ideal will only be reached when schools, religious institutions and social movements, State and enterprises, become pedagogical agents able to educate people and groups in an attitude that makes them feel, think and act according to a full respect of Human Rights and the rights of the peoples.

How to do this maybe can only be answered by the methodology of popular education combined with the broadcasting power of the mass media. How about a pedagogical simulation in which a white is placed in the shoes of a coloured person discriminated for the colour of his skin? Or a European community subjugated, in a pedagogical exercise, to practices and customs of an African or indigenous community?

If we place ourselves in the shoes of others, our “social place” changes and our epistemological place” changes too. No one comes back unchanged from the place of another person. It is difficult to build bridges to that egocentric island that makes us see the world and the people from our individual or group geographical standpoint, and this is, exactly, the role of a pedagogy centred in Human Rights. 

THE RIGHT TO EDUCATION AND CULTURE

JOSÉ MUJICA

President of Uruguay

Translation by Alice Mendez

You all know very well that in knowledge and culture there is not only effort but also joy. It is said that people who jog along the promenade reach a point when they enter into something like an ecstasy where there is no more fatigue and there is only pleasure.

I think the same happens with knowledge and culture. There comes a point when to study, or to investigate, or to learn is no more an effort, but sheer joy. How good if all these delights were at the disposal of many people! How good it would be if in the basket of quality of life that Uruguay can offer its people there was an important quantity of intellectual goods! Not because it is elegant but because it is pleasurable. Because it is enjoyed, with the same intensity with which one can enjoy a plate of noodles. There is no one mandatory list of things that make us happy!

Some may think that the ideal world is a place full of shopping centres... In this world people are happy because they can all leave full of bags with new clothes and boxes of electric appliances. I have nothing against that point of view; I just say it is not the only one possible. I say we can think in a country where the people choose to fix things instead of dispose of them, choose a small car instead of a big car; choose to put on clothes instead of raise the heating.

To squander is not what mature societies do. Go to Holland and see the cities full of bikes. There you will realise that consumerism is not the choice of the true aristocracy of humanity. It is the choice of those dazzled by novelty and the frivolous. The Dutch ride bikes; they use them to go to work but also to go to concerts and parks. This is because they have reached a level where their daily happiness is fed by material goods as well as by intellectual goods. So friends, go and infect other people with the pleasure of knowledge. At the same time, my contribution will be to try and make Uruguayans to use bikes all the time.

Education is the road

And fellows, the bridge between this today and that tomorrow we wish has a name, and it is called education. It is certainly a long and difficult bridge

to cross. But we have to cross it. We owe it to our children and grandchildren. And we have to do it now, when the technological miracle of internet is still fresh and opportunities of access to knowledge are open which were unheard of before.

I grew up with radio, saw the birth of television, then colour television, after that satellite transmissions. Later, forty channels appeared in my television, including those transmitting directly from the United States, Spain and Italy. Then came mobile phones and after that the computer, which at the beginning was just used to process numbers. Each time I was left open mouth. But now with internet my ability to surprise has come to an end. I feel like those humans who saw the wheel for the first time. Or like those who saw fire for the first time.

One feels a witness to a milestone in history. The doors of all libraries and museums are being opened; all the scientific magazines and books of the world will be accessible. And probably all films and all the music of the world. It is overwhelming.

That is why we need that all Uruguayans, and specially the children, know how to swim in this current. We have to join the current and sail in it like fish in water. We will achieve it if that intellectual matrix which we mentioned before is solid. If our kids know how to reason in order and know how to ask worthwhile questions.

It is like a race in two tracks: up there in the world the information ocean, down here getting ready for a transatlantic voyage. Full time schools, universities in the interior, tertiary education made massive. And probably, English from preschool in public schools. Because English is not the language used by the "Yankees", it is the language through which the Chinese communicate with the world. We cannot stay outside. We cannot leave our kids outside. Those are tools that enable us to interact with the universal explosion of knowledge.

This new world does not make our lives simpler, it complicates it. It makes us go beyond and deeper in education. There is no greater task before us.



HUMAN RIGHTS YESTERDAY AND TODAY

ADOLFO PÉREZ ESQUIVEL

Buenos Aires, Argentina

The 20th century was marked by bright lights and shadows: humanity was shaken by two world wars, there were conflicts, famines and sharpening poverty and social inequality, of great technological, scientific and industrial advances there was a little with great potential for overcoming social inequalities...

The human achievement of conquering space, and putting a foot on the Moon, made real what the youth the May Rebellion of 1968 in France indicated: "We are realists, we ask the impossible." What appeared impossible, was possible!

Technology triggered irreversible processes, such as the acceleration of time, that changed thought, values and the meaning of life. It imposed a strongly contradictory globalization, generating in many peoples the loss of their cultures, identity and values, imposing the 'sole thought' of consumer societies, which favours financial capital over the life of the people; it has produced the contamination of thought and the meaning of life, similar to environmental contamination, smog and deforestation, the destruction of biodiversity and the loss of vital resources such as water.

In the face of this situation resistance arises in the hope of the peoples seeking to preserve their identity, their values, their relevance and their spirituality and struggling against the cultural dominance.

Is it possible to ask ourselves if the 21st century advances in the ability to restore the equilibria of the conscience and values of a more just and fraternal humanity, in the observance of human rights from its totality as rights of the person and of peoples... Or if it is possible that the great powers of scientific and technological knowledge can be placed at the service of humanity, instead of utilizing them to subdue people.

Albert Einstein lived with the anxiety of knowing that scientific discoveries were used for the death and not for life, putting at risk our common home,

planet Earth, plaguing it with nuclear arsenals. It appears that the painful memories of Hiroshima and Nagasaki have not penetrated into the conscience of the powerful, nor have the horrors of war.

The fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 marked a milestone in the life of Germany and of humanity, putting an end to the Cold War. Many of us thought then that this would begin a stage of 'disarmament of the armed consciences' and demolition of the walls of intolerance and violence, and that great powers would accept the collaboration and solidarity needed to overcome hunger, poverty and marginality, to preserve natural resources and the environment, such as the water and the forest.

We were wrong. Economic, political, and strategic interests, and the struggle for the world hegemony sharpened and then provoked other wars in Afghanistan, Iraq... and the most recently, in Libya and Syria, wars unleashed on the pretext of defending democracy and human rights; these ended up being violated by countries that claim to be leaders of democracy, generating a more unstable world and intensifying conflict armed, torture and violations of human rights.

The people of Latin America had to confront conflicts such as military dictatorships and the situations of social and structural violence that some countries underwent, under them human rights violations were committed, massacres of indigenous and campesino populations, those forced from their land were repressed and marginalized, applying the policy of terror, as well even under constitutional systems of some more formal than real democracies.

The twenty-first century presents great challenges and it is necessary to promote a "new social contract" needed by humanity: rethinking the world, the societies in which we live and the paths to follow, to build new relationships between peoples and overcome armed conflict, hunger and poverty affecting a large part of humanity. It is necessary to think and develop policies to ensure food sovereignty, and

Translation by Michael Dougherty

to reverse the desertification of the earth, before it's too late. Voices are raised demanding a more just distribution of natural, energy and economic resources.


What is sown is harvested. Every society is the result of those who make it up. In 1948 the United Nations was formed by 57 countries; today there are 192; is not possible to continue as before and that 5 major powers decide the fate of humanity.

Peace is not merely the absence of conflict, nor are human rights only to soothe the pain of the suffering; these are roads to build people's lives and dignity in their permanent dynamic of transformation and that of structures also; they are indivisible values in the democratic construction that we should understand in their entirety.

It is necessary to stop and analyze the path of humanity. To see if really the commitment taken on by the community of nations has come into the minds and hearts of individuals and of peoples and has strengthened values and broken down the walls of intolerance, as was the Berlin Wall and other walls that are yet to be taken down, such as the division between Israel and Palestine, North Korea and South Korea; North and South ... But the hardest walls to bring down are the ones we have in our own minds and hearts ...

A new "social contract" for humanity is needed that has been reborn from grief and seeks to build new areas of understanding, tolerance and dialogue that drives towards the understanding of values that make human rights from their entirety and the right to self-determination and sovereignty of peoples.

These are valuable contributions in the collective consciousness in order to generate the hope that a new dawn for all is possible.

One of the key steps to this new social contract is the reform of the United Nations, the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank. Their structures are abusive of the rights of peoples. There is a long way to go, we must take and transmit to new conscious, rebellious the need to confront injustices and open doors of hope. 

HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE CHURCH

SUGGESTED TASK


LATIN AMERICAN AGENDA

For centuries the Catholic Church opposed formally and officially the human rights uncovered and proclaimed by modern society. Most of these rights were expressly discredited and rejected in solemn documents of the popes of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Just in 1963, with the encyclical *Pacem in Terris*, by John XXIII, the Catholic Church was reconciled with human rights, welcoming them for society, without welcoming them into the Church. In fact, there are many international treaties to implement that the Vatican still has not yet signed.

In this time of change and evolution, it is good that Christians, individually and in community confronted this reality, explore the topic and take a position: Do human rights have validity in the Church? Do we Christians have an awareness of our rights and obligations within ecclesial life? Can you evangelize and pretend to be "light to the world" in a Church that does not give a green light to human rights in its core? What are the human rights that are not fully accepted and respected in the Church? What can we do to raise awareness and to be recognized?

For years, proposals have been circulated by Christian Churches for what could be called a "Constitution" for the Church, an official document, that respecting the peculiarities and differences of a church, could play the role represented by a constitution in democratic countries, that is to say expressing and safeguarding the basic rights and duties of its members.

Professor Leonard Swidler, from the Department of Religion at Temple University, Philadelphia, United States, coordinated the preparation of a text that is still available on the web since then and is studied by many groups and communities. It can be picked up on our information and supplemental materials page (latinoamericana.org/2015/info) as a useful text for discussing the issue. You can send comments to the address specified there.

There are many other critical review initiatives for human rights in the churches. Any of them can be the basis for a reflection / action of the Christian community. 

Translation by Michael Dougherty

MEN AND WOMEN: EQUAL RIGHTS ACCORDING TO THE GOSPEL?

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Women's Rights in the Church

Both men and women are unique. Women think, feel and experience life in their own unique way. Made in the image of their Creator, women no less than men are creators of our human world through their dedication, skills, talents and charisms. When Jesus came as the image of a God who is Love, he empowered women too to represent that Love: to be heralds of the Good News, ministers of his life-giving sacraments and priests of his Eucharist. Women are full human persons and full citizens of Jesus' new community of love.

To grasp the full extent of women's status and mission in the Church, we first have to exorcise the demons that choked Christian faith and life over many previous generations.

Confronting the past

In our long history as a Christian community we have made many mistakes. We now admit with shame that we tolerated slavery, racism, colonial conquest, exploitation of the underdogs. But what about women? The Church allowed the women of our community: our mothers, sisters and daughters, to be treated as second-class citizens. What is worse: the Church presented religious reasons to prove their inferiority.

Teachers and preachers pointed at God the Creator. He had made men stronger, more intelligent and reliable than women, they told us. God the Creator entrusted control to men and subjected women to men's leadership. That's what Jesus too wanted, they said. Jesus appointed men, not women, to represent him in the sacraments. Men should preside at the Eucharist. Women should serve and have children, like the Virgin Mary whose greatest virtue was her humility in spite of being the Mother of God.

To cast out the demon of prejudice and discrimination against women, we have to dig deep.

The roots in pagan culture

No discrimination comes from God. The same applies to the case of women.

Our Christian faith grew up in a mixture of Jewish,

Greek and Roman cultures. Christian faith was young and inexperienced. It often failed to recognise the wrong values of the society it lived in. And this affected the position of women too. In all societies at the time women were considered second-rate. It was generally believed, for instance, that women were not complete human beings. Only a man carried the seed, which it was thought, contains the whole of a future person. Women were like soil in which the seed was planted. Men could *produce* life, women could only *nurture* life they thought.

Moreover it was taken for granted that men should govern, women obey. Roman law banned women from public offices. Women could not testify in court. Women had no rights over their children. A husband held all authority in the home. And all this was to protect women from their own 'feeble minds and weak characters'.

As a first step to righting the wrongs committed against women we should expose the true origin of those wrongs. The root cause lies in the everyday world our Christian ancestors lived in: their social customs, their way of thinking and speaking, their understanding of human nature, what they had been used to in their pagan religions. For the deepest origin of discrimination against women was a pagan world view which had not yet been liberated by Christ.

For 19 centuries Christians continued to tolerate slavery by not fully grasping the fundamental equality of all human beings brought by Christ. In the same way Christians discriminated against women because they still thought as pagans and had not understood the fullness of Christ's vision. But that was not the end.

Rationalising

Yes, pagan culture was a cause of the problem. But not the only one. Look at the parallel of slavery. Early Christians accepted slavery because the pagan society it lived in accepted slavery. Then preachers and teachers began to justify slavery with texts from the Old Testament, from a period before Jesus had

brought the fullness of God's liberating revelation. The same happened to women.

In Old Testament culture fathers and husbands ruled their families. The priests and Levites in the Temple were men. Women could not present their own sacrifice in the Temple or make independent vows. Women were subject in everything and this was seen as a curse lying on women because of Eve's transgression in paradise: "Your husband shall have dominion over you!" (Gn 3,18). Christian preachers began to apply this to Christian women too. They began to interpret some of Jesus' own actions in the light of Old Testament thinking – forgetting that Jesus had come to bring about a completely new creation (2Cor 5,11).

The message of Jesus

In his ministry Jesus paid special attention to the needs of women. When the woman who suffered of a flow of blood touched Jesus from behind, 'he perceived in himself that power had gone forth from him' (Mk 5,21-43). The Syro-Phoenician woman pleaded with Jesus to drive the demon from her daughter (Mk 7,24-30). Jesus also responded to the silent gestures of women: the repentant prostitute who wept as she poured ointment on his feet (Lk 7,36-50), the crying widow of Nain who walked behind the bier of her dead son (Lk 7,11-17), the woman who was bent double with painful arthritis (Lk 13,10-17), the widow in the Temple who put two small coins from her savings in the offering box (Lk 21,1-4) and the women of Jerusalem who wept as they saw Jesus carrying his cross (Lk 23,27-31).

Jesus' teaching drew examples from the life of women, no less than from the life of men. He knew that women kept their treasures in boxes, and that they lit a lamp at dusk (Mt 6,19-21; 5,15-16). He spoke of children playing in the market place and of girls waiting for the bridegroom at a wedding (Mt 11,16-19; 25,1-13). He often told his parables in pairs, with a story about a woman running parallel to a story about a man: the housewife who mixes leaven in the dough (Lk 13,20-21), the woman who lost a coin (Lk 15,8-10) and the poor widow pestering the judge (Lk 18,1-8).

Jesus invited both men and women to enter the new Kingdom of God's Love through baptism. Women receive the same baptism as men. This was a revolu-

tionary change. In Old Testament times women did not personally become members of the Covenant, because they had not been circumcised. They were part of the Covenant indirectly: through their fathers and husbands. They could not present their own sacrifices. Jesus Christ changed all that. Each woman who is baptised becomes another Christ, just as a man is. "All who are baptised in Christ, have put on Christ. There is no longer any discrimination between Jew and non-Jew, slave and free, male and female" (Gal 3,28). Every baptised woman shares fully in Christ's priesthood, kingship and prophetic mission.

Jesus chose 12 men to be his new apostles. He chose men because they had to replace the 12 patriarchs of old. By his choosing only men he did not want to exclude women from future ministry. He chose only Jews among the first twelve, did he want all future ministers to be Jews? But women became his ministers too. In fact, various women joined him in his early ministry: Mary of Magdala, Joanna the wife of Herod's first minister Chuza, Suzanna and several others (Lk 8,1-4).

Jesus confirmed this at the Last Supper. Jesus wanted this to be a Passover meal. "I have longed to eat this Passover with you" (Lk 22,7-16). Now, we know from the Gospels that women always took part in Jesus' community meals. Moreover, the whole family, including women, had to take part in the Paschal meal according to the Passover custom (Ex 12,1-14). The Gospels mention the arrival of Jesus and the Twelve 'in the evening' (Mk 14,17), but other disciples who had done the preparation were already there. They included the women. We can be sure that his mother Mary and the other women disciples were present.

It is to all disciples, women as well as men, that Jesus said: "This is my body. Eat of it all of you. Do this as a memorial of me! The "all of you" include both men and women. No one has ever doubted that Jesus wanted women as much as men to receive holy communion. How can they doubt that Jesus empowered women as much as men to commemorate his sacrifice through the Eucharist? The Council of Trent affirmed in 1562 AD that Christ established the Eucharistic priesthood through the words 'Do this in commemoration of me!' If so, women too are empowered to be Christ's priests.

HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE CLASSROOM

IN AN INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION IN A POPULAR COLONY

MARTÍN VALMASEDA

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The students were simply bored with theoretical lessons on human rights. The teacher tried to convince them of its importance but nevertheless, under the desks, many fingers were texting on “Blackberrys”. The social science textbook dedicated five chapters to Human Rights, “HR” (“Havoc Reckoning” in argot of the students).

The professor’s journalist wife suggested: *Just keep them moving! Don’t let them sit still!* So he began to move himself as he moved the students; (fortunately, the School Superintendent was open-minded and favored the ‘move’).

- The first morning of the experiment, the prof entered the classroom with a stack of cards. On each card were written two different street addresses. For example: one was the address of an orphanage on the outskirts of the small town ... the other was a famous maternity clinic in the town’s plush district, where the upper class birthed their babies. The teacher (who by phone had lined up interviews) sent the students out in groups of four to visit these and similar centers.

The students returned discussing heatedly and making painful comparisons. The class session served to clarify the contrasting realities in the lack of rights or excess of privileges encountered by the students.

It was up to one of the students to visit two parishes: one - a neo-Gothic styled church in the center of town, and the other - a small shed that served as a church in a marginal neighborhood. They had been well received in both parishes and discovered strongly contrasting social levels among the parishioners.

In both communities, they had found a willingness to respect the rights of others, although with overtones: in the one - “paternalistic charity”; while in the popular neighborhood - “social reclaiming”. ... But they also observed something where both concurred: women had a very active presence (preparing liturgy, giving catechesis, washing altar linens ...) in both parishes but a very low presence in community decisions. In each place the parish council was run by a small group of men. One let slip the sly comment about “Jesus and the apostles all being men....”

The student, who was a feminist activist, at that time had no religious argument to refute the comment. So that day, the prof had to seek help from a fellow professor/biblical scholar who selected some biblical citations focused on once marginalized women, whom Jesus had liberated. With that he had the students -- many of them illiterate on or indifferent to the bible -- diving into texts and discovering contrasts between the primitive mentality of that time, the new path opened by the prophet from Nazareth and the astonishing movement back and forth in the feminism or machismo of contemporary Christians.

After that deluge of texts and documents, the prof suggested this task to keep their feet on the ground: *“I don’t know if you’ve thought about it, but in addition to “human” rights, the worlds of plants, animals, rocks, rivers and landscapes also have their own rights ... They agreed. Then he challenged them to photograph nearby places, where those rights of nature have been trampled under or destroyed.*

The young people reacted well since they consider that it would be more fun than paging through the bible. The following week, the students presented an audio in Power-Point with their discussion of the photos of natural-disaster-areas they had found within a few surrounding kilometers.

Another morning, the prof suggested they set up a “socio-drama” or “role-playing”. He told them the history of a journalist who had written a critical article on “labor-regulation” (i.e. “firing”) in the nearby factory. Two days later the author of the article was fired. Oh? The afore-mentioned company happened to be a regular advertising client of the newspaper. That was the history told by the prof. After telling it he proposed a “socio-drama”. He dished out the different roles of the spontaneous actors: the journalist; the newspaper editor; the CEO of the factory; 2 workers under “labor-regulation”; 2 fellow journalists -- co-workers of the “fired journalist” each one with a different way of looking at the situation. It was up to the girls and boys acting their roles to “put themselves in the shoes” of those characters and dialogue

Translation by Alejandro Sheppard

accordingly.

After 20 minutes of “socio-drama”, enough tension was created so that the students began to discuss rights of labor and freedom of the press. Instead of texting on their “iPhones”, now they began digging through their social science text for ideas related to the problems encountered in this role playing.

- The next day, the teacher came with a pile of recent newspapers. He asked them to cut out and make a collage of all news items related to human rights violations. This produced discussion and work for a good long while.

- The following class, the prof proposed that they collect pictures and advertising that belittled rights of any social class, gender rights, rights of different peoples, of women, of infants ... He didn't try to have them study the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. He instead preferred that they draw up their own after going through the local and foreign news events. Each day he challenged them with real situations where many rights of people were at risk or already were being trampled upon.

He helped them to distinguish between what, in the expression of Frei Betto, are human rights and what are animal rights. They began to see how often they themselves, young students, were easily stuck on the right to being informed, freedom of opinion and of the press ... but they did not pay much attention to the rights of the inhabitants of the misery villas, “favelas” ... of many Latino, Asian and African peoples: their lack of food, health, housing -- those rights about which most well-set-up societies forget. For them, it is more important to be able to buy their favorite newspaper than go to school with better bilingual education ... simply because their stomachs are full and their health benefits assured.

- One of the last days, the prof appeared accompanied by a parent with his child, a chubby boy with glasses and a limp. The father took his leave and the teacher re-entered the classroom, gently pushing along the boy who looked shyly at the other students.

Today I bring you, said the teacher, a concrete case to analyze. John here is coming to our school for the first time despite our course being advanced. He had to leave the school where he studied because he had problems with his peers: what is called bullying (the newcomer blushed slightly). I have asked permission from John”, continued the teacher, to discuss his case,

because it is important to examine the rights of people, not in theory, but in actual situations. Surely you all know similar cases...

“Of course some of that happens here too!” – interrupted one of the most outspoken boys - I don't want to mention any names, but everybody knows ...

A buzzing arose. Some blushed as they lowered their heads. The situation became tense. The prof was able to keep the problem on an objective theoretic plane:

- *We're not going to talk about individual cases, but rather the causes and consequences that exist in many schools making it possible to happen among peers.*

There was an explosion of dialogue in which the new visitor also took part. The prof asked them to note the hidden causes and consequences. In small groups they continued to dig deeper. When the bell rang at the end of the class, they were seen leaving the classroom heatedly discussing the theme. Someone's cell phone rang and he quickly turned it off.

- They finished the days allotted by the program for studying the five chapters. The teacher commented with his journalist friend on the success of “the moves” by which his class had been transformed.

At the beginning of the last day, he asked his students: “What do you say about today pulling out the book that we have almost forgotten? They laughed and opened the book.

Can we brainstorm today? - Do what? they asked. He divided the black board with a line down the middle. - It's like a rain of ideas. Here, we go. I propose to review the book quickly. Anyone can spontaneously get up, take the chalk, and write on the right side of the board any of the issues we have been discussing these days. On the left side write the same about any problems we have forgotten.

Within 10 minutes, both sides of the board were already filled with words. Words, which in the heads of the students, brought to memory situations close to their lives, along with others that previously had been seen as far from home, but which they now felt really present in their world.

As they were leaving for their homes, after the lively discussion, some began to recall that they still had their “Blackberrys”, iPads and iPhones, but that apart from them there were other realities more important, and they will never be able to forget them.

LA CANCIÓN DEL NEGRO ALÍ

2015 WINNER OF
«LATIN AMERICAN SHORT STORY»
CONTEST

RICHARD JOEL RICO LÓPEZ

Acarigua, Venezuela

«Siempre que triunfa la vida, pierde espacio la amargura» Ali Primera.

La tarde del viernes caía en medio de aquel abril caluroso, sofocante por momentos. Apenas se movían algunas de las hojas de los inmensos cedros y samanes que guardaban como gigantes centinelas las inmediaciones de la plazoleta de la pequeña ciudad. Se iba una semana más, y con ella una nueva jornada de trajines, rutina, cansancio, esperanza y desilusiones, entremezcladas en el pensamiento meditabundo que acompañaba el caminar del joven Ernesto. El dulce olor que emanaba de los árboles se entremezclaba con el amargo sinsabor que generaban inquietudes en el muchacho: ¿cómo hago para que el dinero alcance?, ¿cómo sustento a los míos?, ¿por qué me siento vacío en el trabajo que hago?, ¿por qué unos pocos tienen tanto y el gran resto tenemos tan poco? Todas estas interrogantes se repetían ensordecedoramente en su mente, y aunque trataba de pensar en otras cosas, estos pensamientos, cual ola que viene y va, le embestían intempestivamente, sin permitirle percibir cuántos metros avanzaba y quién o qué estaba en la siguiente banca de la plaza o justo a su lado.

De repente, con el mismo ímpetu con que le abor-
daban sus pensamientos, sintió que le halaron por la
manga de la camisa, y sin darle tiempo de pronunciar
palabra alguna, alcanzó a oír en tono claro y fuerte:
—¡Venga Negro! ¿Le limpiamos esos zapatos? El joven,
aletargado por la interrupción en su pensamiento,
apenas si lo miró y con el ceño fruncido por la incomo-
didad de aquel acto insolente, hizo con su cabeza sin
mediar palabra un signo de negación antes de reanudar
su marcha.

Empezaba nuevamente a sumergirse en sus pensa-
mientos, cuando escuchó justo detrás de sí a alguien
que cantaba con efusiva y clara voz: —Échala, tu pala-
bra contra quien sea de una vez, así sepas que rompe el
cielo échala, tu palabra por dentro quema y te da sed,
ES MEJOR PERDER EL HABLA, QUE TEMER HABLAR, Écha-
la... Larala... larala...

Ernesto volteó lentamente intentando no mostrar
interés en lo que oía y al hacerlo, allí estaba, el mismo
viejo que le halaba la camisa momentos antes, son-
riente, efusivo, tarareando y bailando aquella cancion-
cita que parecía estar dedicada a él que nada decía y

se encerraba en un mundo de ideas ambiguas y difusas.
Por vez primera se detuvo a detallarlo. Era un persona-
je de mediana estatura, ojos grandes y barba espesa.
Su ropaje dejaba mucho que desear por lo maltratado
y viejo. Aparentaba tener unos 50 años, aunque en la
miseria, los años parecen acelerar su marcha. Sobre su
espalda una mochila llena de objetos de diferente uti-
lidad. Las manos, que por instantes parecían maltratar
lo poco que quedaba de un viejo cuatro (instrumento
musical de cuerdas venezolano), se veían ennegrecidas
y encallecidas por una vida de mucho trabajo y segura-
mente mucho dolor. El joven se acercó un poco más y
pudo percibir un sutil olor a alcohol y tabaco, compa-
ñeros inseparables del hombre de la calle.

Insperadamente el viejo dejó de cantar, miró al
joven y le dijo: —¿Ahora sí se decidió? Écheme una
manito y déjeme limpiarle esos zapatos; mire los míos,
están viejos, eso sí, ¡pero nunca sucios! ¿No sabe usted
que los zapatos son el reflejo del alma del que los carga
puestos?, comentó.

El joven apenas sonrió y sin mucho convencimiento
sólo atinó a decir: —Empiece entonces, pero rapidito
porque ya no tarda en caer la noche. En su interior
había una motivación inconsciente que aún no enten-
día y que le había hecho prestar atención a tan curioso
personaje que veía por primera vez en aquellos lares.

Silbando sin parar, el viejo limpiabotas comenzó
lentamente a sacar de su mochila el betún y el cepillo,
levantó cuidadosamente el pie del muchacho y co-
menzó su labor sin dejar por un momento de silbar la
canción que antes había tarareado; el joven Ernesto,
intrigado le preguntó: —Esa canción, de casualidad, ¿la
cantaba usted refiriéndose a mí? —¡Claro! Y también
por los otros cuatro clientes que me han ayudado hoy,
todos pasaron molestos, mirando el piso, pensando en
quien sabe qué y en un silencio que parecía un funeral;
como usted puede ver, yo casi no me puedo callar y por
eso es que le canto a la gente pa' que deje la amargura
y empiece a levantar la cabeza.

Ante aquella aclaración, el joven sintió algo de
vergüenza, se quedó observando con detenimiento el
cuadro dantesco de aquel hombre, plagado de necesi-
dades y dolores, con el cuerpo y rostro lacerado por las

marcas de sus sufrimientos. Aún así, en sus ojos había una llama viva que irradiaba esperanzas e ilusiones. Se dio cuenta de lo mucho que tenía y lo poco agradecido que había sido con la vida, reconoció en sí mismo la pobreza de su figura joven, con mayores recursos, y sumido en una permanente amargura: *—Cuando las cosas parecen ir mal, Dios se encarga de mostrarnos el verdadero dolor de Cristo padeciendo*, pensó para sí mismo.

Incorporándose nuevamente, dijo al viejo: *—¿Y de dónde es usted, amigo?*, ya con un aire de mayor confianza y curioso por saber más de aquel personaje que comenzaba a interesarle. Por primera vez en todo aquel rato de canciones y palabras incesantes guardó silencio. Levantando la mirada hacia el poniente se transformó su semblante, se quedó con la mirada perdida por unos segundos, luego volvió hacia el zapato y lus-trando con fuerza susurró una canción: *—“Yo vengo de dónde usted no ha ido, he visto las cosas que no ha visto...”*, y continuó tarareando un murmullo *uh,uh,uh...* El joven se sintió consternado y a la vez extrañado por esa costumbre tan particular de responder con trozos de canciones y antes de que pudiera interrogarle nuevamente, el viejo limpiabotas le miró y dijo: *—¿Escuchó alguna vez de la tragedia de Vargas?* (40 km al este de Caracas) y volviendo su mirada hacia el horizonte, *—De ahí, ;de por ahí vengo, mijo! Rodando como una piedra; el agua se lo llevó todo, viví un tiempo en los refugios y otro más en la calle, y ya ni se cómo terminé en esta ciudad tan lejana; a lo mejor me estoy alejando de tan malos recuerdos.*

Aquella revelación interpeló a Ernesto sobre la forma desconfiada e inhumana con que le había juzgado en un primer momento. Para entonces había pensado en el fastidio de cruzarse con otro borracho más de la plaza; con sagacidad veloz buscó entre sus cosas, *—Viejo, si no le ofende, yo cargo aquí unas camisas y estos zapatos que me dieron en el trabajo y que podrían...*

Inusitadamente le interrumpió silbando nuevamente y cantando con los ojos inundados por un brillo especial: *—“...No es importante el ropaje, sino distinguirla a fondo, los que van comiendo dioses y defecando demonios. Zapatos de mi conciencia, mal que bien me van llevando, larala...”*

Ahora sí que Ernesto no entendía aquel misterioso personaje, plagado de necesidades, y aún así le daba igual tener o no tener ropa y calzado; impulsado por la intriga que le causaba y detectando algo familiar en las entonaciones que el viejo hacía, le dijo: *—¿Yo co-*

nozco esa canción! Esa es de... ¿de Alí primera, cierto?

—¿Sí Señor! Y me las sé toíticas [todas] completas!

Golpeó con su trapeador el zapato derecho del joven;

— ¡Listo!, ahora sí esos zapatos están decentes.

El joven asintió con la cabeza y buscando su cartera, *—¿Cuánto le debo, mayor?*

—¿Lo que usted me quiera dar y si son las gracias, bien recibidas serán!

El joven se sonrió ante tan original respuesta y le dio un par de billetes que el viejo guardó celosamente dentro de los bolsillos de su vieja mochila; habían pasado cincuenta minutos desde que se encontraron y ya se había olvidado, al menos por un tiempo, de sus afa-nes y preocupaciones, de la economía y la política, de tantas banalidades que le atormentaban. Ahora éstas le parecían vacías y TONTAS. Sin proponérselo, vivió en este corto encuentro un proceso de renovación que le impulsaba a semejanza de aquel ahora hermoso perso-naje, cantar por las maravillas del hoy y las vírgenes esperanzas del mañana.

—Fue un placer conocerle amigo, mi nombre es Ernesto; si hay algo en lo que pudiera ayudarle sólo dígame. El viejo terminó de guardar sus trapos en la mochila, tomó en sus manos nuevamente el viejo cua-tro, colocó la mano sobre el hombro derecho del joven y con una efusiva cara de emoción le dijo: *—Por ahora tengo en este viejo morral todo lo necesario para vivir feliz lo que queda del día de hoy.* Indicando con sus dedos hacia el poniente, se despidió diciendo: *—Por allí esta mi ruta, cuídese joven y no se olvide de empezar a ser feliz.*

Hizo un ademán de comenzar su marcha, cuando el joven, inquietado, preguntó: *—¿Y cuál es su nombre, viejo amigo?* El viejo volteó vivazmente. *—Me llaman Alí y para los buenos amigos como usted me dejo llamar el NEGRO ALÍ.*

Ya la noche comenzaba a caer sobre la ciudad. El viejo tomó su cuatro, soltó una carcajada y comenzó nuevamente a cantar: *“Es de noche, cuenta el limpia-botas cuánto ha hecho y cuenta el pregonero cuánto ha hecho...es de noche...”*

Ernesto con el llanto a flor de piel, también tara-reaba aquella dulce canción y cuando ya la figura del viejo comenzaba a perderse en el horizonte le escuchó nuevamente cantar: *“Es de noche...”*, el joven tomó su bolso, dio la vuelta, y mirando al cielo que mostraba sus primeros luceros, levantó los brazos cantando: *“...Y habrá Mañana”.*

PROMESAS DE ESPERANZA PARA NUESTRA NACIÓN

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2015 WINNER OF THE
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ZACARÍAS 8,1-12

ANTONIO SALOMÓN MEDINA FUENTES

El Salvador, Centro América

El Dios-Diosa de la Vida, nos ha estado enviando desde hace mucho tiempo el siguiente mensaje:

• Así dice *El Señor de la Justicia*: Me siento suspirar por ustedes, mi Pueblo, que lleva uno de mis Nombres. Me he sentido terriblemente pelusero por todo lo que ocurre en la tierra que vio nacer a Oscar Arnulfo Romero Galdámez. ¡Tanto así, que me indigna el estado en el que están, y eso me hace sentir triste e inconforme! Tengo sentimientos encontrados por todo lo que acontece y afecta a la Región Centroamericana y a todo el mundo que dice creer en Mí.

• Así dice *El Señor de la Solidaridad*: Necesito regresar con ustedes, vivir con ustedes, encarnarme en su historia, para mostrarles el camino de la fidelidad, de forma que toda la Región y el mundo exclamen: ¡éste es un Pueblo que está empeñado en garantizar los derechos humanos básicos de sus habitantes!, que sí demuestra el Amor al prójimo, un pueblo en el que se nota que se ven como hermanas y hermanos, demostrándolo con sus acciones y actos de fraternidad.

• Así dice *El Señor de la Paz y Reconciliación*: Nuevamente veré que las personas de la tercera edad podrán sentarse a platicar y recordar sus buenos tiempos, al calor de un atol, en los alrededores de las calles, plazas y parques, sin que se les vea como una carga, ni mendigando, o imbuidos en algún tipo de adicción; serán vistos como iguales: personas que contribuyeron en la vida productiva de nuestro país y continúan contribuyendo con su experiencia y cuidados; a ellas y ellos se les verá con ternura y respeto.

Esas mismas calles, plazas y parques, estarán llenas de niñas, niños, adolescentes y jóvenes, conviviendo de manera armoniosa, jugando, compartiendo con sus familias, donde ya no hay miedo ni desconfianza; donde la seguridad pública cumple su papel, signo de que el tejido social está restablecido; donde existe un diálogo abierto, franco y sincero entre las generaciones nuevas y las que ya dieron su aporte.

• Así dice *El Señor de la Verdad*: Por el momento, lo anterior pareciera una imagen ideal, algo muy lejano, que no es posible... Pero recuerden que ¡soy un Hacedor de lo imposible! ¿Acaso han dejado de creer en Mí? Yo continúo creyendo en Ustedes, debido al infinito amor que les tengo. No es posible que se den por vencidos en este momento tan importante de su Historia, que también es Mi Historia: ¡les he dado la capacidad de crear leyes y políticas públicas que les beneficien a todos, para el bien común! No bajo una visión opresora; más bien, fundamentadas en la tan anhelada Justicia Restitutiva.


• Así dice *El Señor de las y los Migrantes*: ¡Ya basta de tanta diáspora! Es necesario que regresen, para que puedan contribuir desde acá con todo lo bueno que han aprendido en otros países. Es necesario hacer a un lado el madeinchismo y explorar las oportunidades que se abren desde aquí. ¡Excluyan de sus vidas al dios mamón! Lo adoran ustedes cayendo seducidos por las estrategias de consumo y derroche de bienes y recursos... ¡Permitan que Yo les libere! Ya que los costos sociales de su partida se han hecho evidentes en sus familias de origen, si el interés primordial ha sido mejorar las condiciones de vida de quienes aman, es preciso que no se excluyan ustedes mismos, ni vean fuera de sus núcleos familiares, son su sangre y carne. Sería como si se negaran a sí mismos.

Debo repetirlo, ser enfático y claro: ¡Ustedes son mis Hijas e Hijos y Yo soy su legítimo Padre-Madre! Vivo, respiro, camino, trabajo, me siento a la mesa, me alegro, lloro y sufro con ustedes, escucho sus plegarias. Aun cuando pareciera que estoy en silencio, pongo atención a cada una de sus palabras, no los dejo en el total abandono. Pero es necesario que se reconozcan como lo que son. Es vital mirar que no existe un Yo sin un Vos o Tú. Esto a veces depende del nivel de autoconocimiento que se asuma.

• Así dice *El Señor de la Vida*: el trabajo es una bendición para todo ser viviente. Por ello es importante que escuchen y traigan a la memoria las vidas y palabras de sus mártires: palabras de Justicia y Paz, que pueden ayudar a construir una sociedad más equitativa y tolerante. Sobre ellas debería estar cimentada toda confesión de fe, más allá de las infraestructuras religiosas físicas e ideológicas, que me han decepcionado y no me han dado honor realmente.

La explotación y sobre-explotación impuestas por los que controlan de facto este sistema idólatrico, nos negaban desde un inicio nuestros derechos básicos y compromisos laborales, entre ellos lo necesario para vivir, sin responsabilidad patronal, seguridad social y pensión para la vejez, lo que también se hacía extensivo hacia mis otras criaturas, formas de vida que también creé, a quienes el sistema trataba también de manera impropia, despiadada e implacable.

Contribuyamos a una agricultura auto-sostenible, sin químicos que afecten de manera negativa al envenenamiento de la tierra y el calentamiento global, renovando así esta Casa que construí para que habitemos como hermanas y hermanos en perfecta Unidad.

Pero ahora ya es tiempo de cambiar la manera de relacionarnos, ustedes Conmigo, y entre ustedes como Pueblo. Es el momento de sembrar el maíz y el frijol que traen sustento y dan vida con sus frutos, que traen fuentes de empleo y sustentan nuestra economía local, regional y mundial, en otras palabras: la Paz y la Seguridad que tanto soñamos, por el momento. 

2020 WILL BE TOO LATE

PARIS 2015: DECISIVE SUMMIT ON CLIMATE CHANGE

alainet.org, elpais.es, globalchange.gov

The geo transformation has begun. Earth is undergoing an unprecedented and accelerated change, which is reaching every corner of the planet. Temperatures will continue rise and by 2050, temperatures will average between one and two degrees higher than now, depending on the amount of greenhouse gases we emit.

Since pre-industrial times to 1780, the average global temperature has risen 0.8 degrees. Earth has experienced climate changes in the past. However, the differences between past changes in climate and the changes now are the speed at which climate change is taking effect and its is now scientifically proven that rises in temperatures are due to human activity. Yes. Humans are causing rapid, unsustainable and detrimental changes to the planetary climate.

The International Energy Agency (IEA) has published a special report about the future of climate change and has warned governments: 2020 will be too late to make decisions to address climate change. Some measures must be taken before 2020 to reach the proposed target of 2 ° C. In addition, the energy sector must reduce emissions at the rate of 5% annually to significantly address climate change.

Avoiding dangerous climate change involves maintaining a level of concentration of greenhouse gases below 450 parts per million (PPM). Greenhouse gases below 450 PPM will ensure an increase in the average temperature of the planet no more than 2 ° C. This is the target set by the Convention on Climate Change in 2009.

The 2015 Summit on Climate Change in Paris should call for a new deal on emissions; this time with the inclusion of emerging powers as a fundamental part. The goal is to reach - with a preparatory stage in Lima at the end of 2014 - an ambitious commitment to replace the 2020 Kyoto agreement.

The latest round of negotiations of the Convention on Climate Change (Doha 2012) established 2015 as the deadline to reach a number of agreements that would take effect in 2020. However, the report from the IEA states that this date is too late to ensure climate stability because of the emissions that would accumulated by then. To achieve the desired goal, emissions must reach their peak in 2020 and then start to decline vigorously. With constantly growing emissions and an agreement to start implementation in 2020, reducing the effects causing climate change to effective levels will be impossible.

Something very important and encouraging has taken place in the United States. The White House has accepted the evidence of climate change and is actively encouraging its citizens to accept climate change and to change their habits to reduce the causes of climate change.

Please, read the latest report on Climate Change: *globalchange.gov* 

Translation by Norman E. Ortega

FEMINISMO: PEREGRINAJE HACIA LA LIBERACIÓN

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2015 WINNER OF THE
"GENDER PERSPECTIVES" CONTEST

MAITE PÉREZ MILLET

Santiago de Cuba

Los primeros comportamientos transgresores de las mujeres, registrados en la edad antigua, muestran la incipiente corriente de pensamiento que devino luego en feminismo. Al irse fortaleciendo e irradiándose a cada vez más mujeres y algunos pocos hombres, fue alcanzando la dimensión de movimiento social-político en los albores de la Revolución Francesa. Su esencial motor de empuje para la emancipación femenina radica evidentemente, en su objetivo más reconocido: contribuir a la liberación de las mujeres de las arbitrariedades, invisibles, pero efectivas cadenas del patriarcado y luchar por la equidad entre los géneros.

A través de maneras diversas y valiéndose de disímiles recursos en las diferentes olas que recogen la historia del feminismo, las mujeres han mostrado su deseo de salirse del estrecho espacio en el que injustamente les tocó desenvolverse, teniendo en cuenta los innegables dones que poseen para vivir la libertad personal y aportar a la libertad colectiva. Ejemplos como el de las Pitagóricas, un grupo minoritario de atrevidas mujeres que en franco desafío de lo permitido para ellas, se insertaron en el discipulado seguidor de Pitágoras y participaban de discusiones y aportes; o las cortesanas, que desde su socialmente cuestionable e impúdica relación con los hombres, podían a veces influir en diversas áreas de la sociedad, desde la política, hasta la producción de cosméticos, a través de sus seductoras «conversaciones entre sábanas», donde en ocasiones expresaban sus criterios, iluminando el pensamiento de su influyente y ocasional compañero de alcoba. Quemar ajustadores en un acto de protesta colectiva; exigir el derecho al sufragio, con las respectivas consecuencias derivadas de un largo enfrentamiento a las masculinas autoridades de la política en el mundo entero; escribir en plataformas públicas cuando sólo les era permitido a los hombres y opinar sobre algún tema, mostrando una desarrollada capacidad de análisis; insertarse en brillantes tertulias donde solía deslumbrar la intelectualidad masculina y una voz femenina -en ocasiones se iban sumando otras- surgía opinando desde posicionamientos de incuestionable profundidad e interés. El ecofeminismo


en la actualidad ha desvelado la manera particular en que afecta a las mujeres el daño que sufre el planeta, teniendo en cuenta la posición social que históricamente nos ha asignado la cultura. De ahí, que, como tendencia, ha abrazado militantemente la defensa al humano derecho de gozar nuestro hábitat común, nuestro planeta, y asumir así el deber que también tenemos de protegerlo para su conservación.

Nombres como Olympia de Gouges, Simone de Beauvoir, Mary Vollstone Kraft, Marcela Lagarde, Ivonne Gevara, entre otras muchas, figuran en la extensa lista de mujeres que desde sus escritos, denuncias y actitudes de irreverencia, han contribuido a visibilizar desde sus diferentes países y épocas, la desigualdad, opresión, subordinación y exclusión, a la que han estado sometidas las mujeres, así como la urgencia de no quedarse pasivas y actuar en favor de su emancipación.

En este largo bregar que aún no termina y desde diferentes tendencias (feminismo liberal, radical, de la diferencia, ecofeminismo), se ha ido creando en mujeres y hombres una conciencia de los orígenes de las desigualdades entre un género y otro, además de fomentar una creciente necesidad de revertir la situación desde el reconocimiento de nuestras potencialidades, derechos y el ejercicio de nuestra autonomía, viviendo el empoderamiento en espacios y roles que históricamente nos han sido negados.

La pertenencia al movimiento feminista nos dispone para la defensa de nuestra libertad, desde el dolor y la prisión compartida por miles de años, desde la fortaleza de no estar solas en la lucha por la equidad y el derecho a nuestra autonomía, como una forma de expresión plena de nuestra libertad interior. Nos ha enseñado a romper patrones aprendidos que movilizan nuestros comportamientos femeninos y moldean nuestros proyectos de vida con materia prima del modelo tradicional de feminidad. Ha promovido la sororidad y el acompañamiento de unas a otras en el camino de construir verdaderos referentes de autonomía y libertad, en correspondencia con nuestros actuales contextos sociales e históricos.

En este peregrinar hacia la emancipación y la equidad de género, al interior del movimiento feminista aún falta mucho por hacer. Los esfuerzos pudieran ir orientados hacia la eliminación de las divisiones que subsisten dentro del movimiento, que en cierta medida contaminan su objetivo y lo trastocan, afectando también la imagen que sobre éste se tiene y limitando su alcance a un mayor número de mujeres y hombres. Contribuir a la liberación de los hombres, teniendo en cuenta el carácter relacional de los géneros, pues es imposible hacer una opción por la libertad y pretender ser una mujer autónoma, si no existe la misma proyección en nuestros esposos, padres, hijos, hermanos, amigos, compañeros de trabajo, jefes, subordinados y demás hombres con los que constantemente compartimos nuestra vida. Erróneamente pudiera pensarse que ellos ya son libres y autónomos; sin embargo, desde la concepción del brasileño Paulo Freire, la situación del opresor frente al oprimido no es de mucha mayor libertad que la de este último, y en este sentido, en la medida en que el oprimido se libera, también contribuye a la liberación de su opresor. Construirnos y representar referentes más humanos y desarrolladores de ser mujeres, para contribuir así al surgimiento de futuras generaciones de féminas sin el miedo paralizante a la libertad, y con la disposición y el entrenamiento para soñar y concretar sus vidas desde la autonomía y la libertad interior y exterior.

Igualmente, siempre está el reto de continuar visibilizando la desigualdad a la que somos sometidas, desde los designios socioculturales tradicionales y sus nuevas máscaras, las que usa para disimularse y continuar su perpetuación. 

COLECCIÓN «TIEMPO AXIAL»

PATROCINADA POR ESTA «AGENDA LATINOAMERICANA»

Imprescindible para estar al tanto de los avances de la teología latinoamericana de la liberación y su encuentro con otras fronteras de pensamiento, los «nuevos paradigmas» del pensamiento mundial actual. He aquí los títulos ya publicados:

1. **ASETT**, *Por los muchos caminos de Dios*, I.
2. John **HICK**, *La metáfora del Dios encarnado*.
3. **ASETT**, *Por los muchos caminos de Dios*, II.
4. Faustino **TEIXEIRA**, *Teología de las religiones*.
5. José María **VIGIL**, *Teología del pluralismo religioso. Curso sistemático de teología popular*.
6. **ASETT**, *Por los muchos caminos de Dios*, III.
7. Alberto **MOLINER**, *Pluralismo religioso y sufrimiento ecohumano* (sobre la obra de Paul F. Knitter).
8. **ASETT**, *Por los muchos caminos de Dios*, IV.
9. R. **FORNET-BETANCOURT**, *Interculturalidad y religión*.
10. Roger **LENAERS**, *Otro cristianismo es posible. Fe en lenguaje de modernidad*.
11. Ariel **FINGUERMAN**, *La elección de Israel*.
12. Jorge **PIXLEY**, *Teología de la liberación, Biblia y filosofía procesual*.
13. **ASETT**, *Por los muchos caminos de Dios*, V.
14. John Shelby **SPONG**, *Un cristianismo nuevo para un mundo nuevo*.
15. Michael **MORWOOD**, *El católico del mañana*.

Últimos, recién publicados:

16. Diarmuid **O'MURCHU**, *Teología cuántica. Implicaciones espirituales de la nueva física*.
17. Roger **LENAERS**, *Aunque no haya un dios ahí arriba*.
18. John Shelby **SPONG**, *Vida eterna*.

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Lea el índice, el prólogo del libro que le interese, y vea la forma de adquirirlo en:

<http://tiempoaxial.org>

Los volúmenes 1, 3, 6, 8 y 13 forman la conocida serie «*Por los muchos caminos de Dios*», proyecto teológico colectivo de la ASETT, que confronta la teología de la liberación con la teología del pluralismo religioso. Vea la serie, en cuatro idiomas:

<http://tiempoaxial.org/PorLosMuchosCaminos>

También existe esta colección en portugués, «Tempo Axial», en la Editorial Paulus, de São Paulo, Brasil, www.paulus.com.br

WHO'S WHO

AMONG THE AUTHORS OF THIS AGENDA

Only some; others need no introduction for our readers...

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Patrus ANANIAS is a *mineiro* of Bocaiuta. Studied Law, connected to popular movements since his youth, active militant in the Catholic Church, in Base Communities, Human Rights groups and in politics. Was Councillor, state and federal Representative, minister in Lula's government. Today, professor of the Catholic University of Belo Horizonte.

Marcelo BARROS, Camaragibe, Recife, Brazil, 1944, from a Catholic family of poor workmen. Biblical scholar, member of ASETT, has written 35 books about the popular reading of the Bible, Ecumenical Spirituality, Theology of the Earth, Theology of macro-ecumenism and of the cultural and religious pluralism. He is counsellor to the *Pastoral da Terra* and the *Movimento dos Sem Terra* (MST). Presently, lives in a secular community in Recife (PE), Brazil, under a health treatment, and collaborates with various theology magazines of different countries.

Frei BETTO, Carlos Alberto Libânio Christo, better known as Frei Betto, (Belo Horizonte, Minas Gerais, 25 August 1944) is a Brazilian Dominican monk, theologian of Liberation. He is author of more than 50 books of diverse literary genres and religious topics.

Miguel CONCHA MALO is member of the Mexican Committee for the Defence and Promotion of Human Rights "Fray Francisco de Vitoria, O.P.". Presently he is professor at UNAM, vice-president of the Mexican Academy of Human Rights, member of the Council of the Commission to Prevent and Eradicate Violence

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Jordi COROMINAS was born in Balsareny, Catalunya, the same village as Pedro Casaldàliga, who is his relative. Has lived for 14 years in Nicaragua and El Salvador where he directed a doctorate in Iberoamerican philosophy which was one of Ignacio Ellacuría's projects, dean of the UCA University who was assassinated in 1989. Doctor in Philosophy, he is dedicated to the study of Zubiri's philosophy and his projection in the field of ethics, philosophy of religion and social philosophy. He works at Ramon Llull University of Barcelona. Among his best publications: *Xavier Zubiri, La soledad Sonora* (Taurus, 2006; Harmattan 2012); *Ética primera, aportación de Zubiri al diálogo ético contemporáneo* (Desclee de Brouwer, 2001) and *Zubiri y la religión* (Universidad Iberoamericana, Puebla, 2008).

Sandro GALLAZZI was born in Italy in 1945, where he studied theology. He is now in Brazil since 1973 and works since 1983 in the Pastoral Committee for the Land of Amapá, at the service of the poor in the countryside and the forest. He is Doctor in Religion Sciences and active member of the Latin American Biblical movement.

Alfredo J. GONÇALVES, was born on the Isla de Madeira in Portugal in 1953. He is member of the Scalabrinian order. Their charism is working with migrants and refugees throughout the world. He has lived in Brazil since 1969. He has always worked in social ministry: in the periphery and *favelas* of São Paulo, with the homeless, with sugarcane workers. He was an advisor on social ministry for the CNBB.

Armando LAMPE was born in the island of Aruba, minor Antilles. He is doctor in social and cultural sciences by the Amsterdam Free University. He is professor-researcher at the Quintana Roo University in Mexico. He has coordinated the Programme of Studies for the Caribbean, which edits the Mexican Magazine of the Caribbean. He is author of *Breve historia del cristianismo en el Caribe*, edited by CEHILA, Committee for the Study of the Church in Latin America, of which he was president.

Héctor LAPORTA. Peruvian, pastor of a Hispanic

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David LOY was born in the Panama Canal Zone. His father was in the U.S. Navy so the family traveled a great deal. He attended Carleton College in Minnesota, and spent his junior year abroad studying philosophy at King's College, University of London. After graduation in 1969 he moved to San Francisco and then to Hawaii where he began to practice Zen Buddhism. He is married to Linda Goodhew, formerly an associate professor of English literature at Gakushuin University in Tokyo, Japan. They have one son, Mark Loy Goodhew.

David MOLINEAUX. Educator and writer, living in Chile for many years now. He has been giving courses about the evolution of life on Earth, the new cosmology emerging in science, and its humane and spiritual meaning. Has written two books on these topics: *Polvo de estrellas* (1998) and *En el principio era el sueño* (2002). To celebrate our humanity and the world in evolution he conducts groups of bio-dance.

Afonso MURAD. Graduated in Pedagogy by the Universidad Estadual de Montes Claros (1981), in Philosophy by the Pontificia Universidad Católica of Minas Gerais (1984) and doctor in Theology by the Universidad Gregoriana (1992). He specialised in Management and Marketing, by the *Fundação Dom Cabral* (2006). He is professor of theology at the Facultad Jesuítica (FAJE) and at the *Instituto Santo Tomás de Aquino* (ISTA) of Belo Horizonte.

IVO POLETTI is a graduated philosopher and social scientist, and a popular educator as an option. He presently works as an Educational Counsellor to the *Fórum Mudanças Climáticas e Justiça Social* (www.fmcliclimaticas.org.br), which articulates movements, entities and social pastorals around the defence of social rights of the affected peoples by climatic changes provoked by planetary warming. From 1975 he was Executive Secretary to the *Comissão Pastoral da Terra*, Counsellor of *Cáritas Brasileira*, and member of the team of Social Mobilisation for the Programme *Fome Zero*, from the Federal Government of Brazil. About that period he wrote: *Brasil: oportunidades perdidas. Meus dois anos no Governo Lula*, Garamond, RJ 2005. www.ivopoletto.blogspot.

Eduardo DE LA SERNA. Doctor in Theology, pro-

fessor of Bible (San Pablo). Parish priest at the Quilmes diocese (Buenos Aires, Argentina) and national coordinator of the Group of Priests opting for the poor. He frequently collaborates with some national newspapers trying to think about present times from the point of view of the faith and reality. He is author of popular and academic books and articles.

João Pedro STÉDILE, 1953, Brazilian economist and social activist. He is the present leader of the Movement of Rural Workers Without Land (MST) Gaucho of Marxist origin, and one of the major defenders of an agrarian reform in Brazil. Born in Rio Grande do Sul, son of small farmers of Italian origin (trentino), lives now in the city of São Paulo. Studied economy at the Pontificia Universidad Católica (PUC-RS), with a postgraduate from UNAM, México. Counsellor of the Land Pastoral Committee (CPT) at a national level. Author of various books about the agrarian issue.

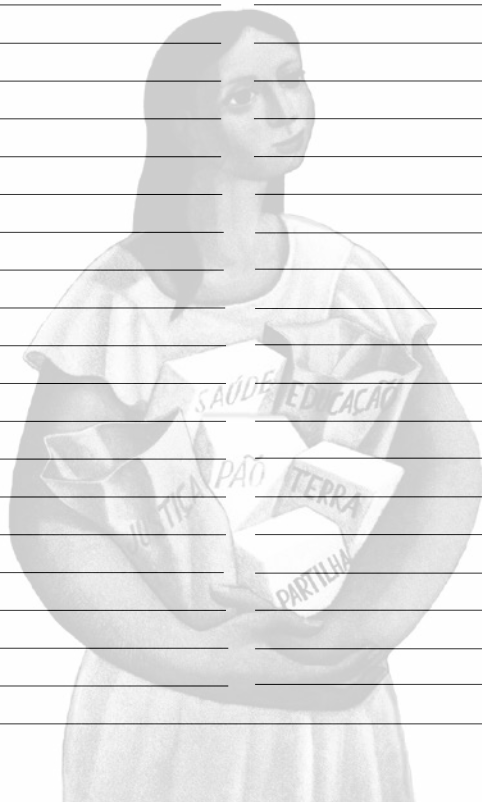
Elsa TAMEZ. 1951, Monterrey, México. Scholar in Literature and Linguistics. Doctor in Theology in Lausanne, Switzerland. She was professor at the *Seminário Bíblico Latinoamericano* and the *Universidad Nacional*, both in San José de Costa Rica. His last work is an interlinear Greek-Spanish New Testament.

Martín VALMASEDA, Director of CAUCE, *Centro Audiovisual de Comunicación y Educación*, in Guatemala (www.equipocauce.com), engaged in the production of videos, recordings, leaflets and books for educational and popular settings.

Víctor VIÑUALES. Sociologist, co-founder and Director of *Ecología y Desarrollo*, member of the *Consejo Asesor del Fondo de Cooperación para Agua y Saneamiento* of the Government of Spain. Member of *Servicio de Juventud* from the City Council of Zaragoza (1987-1992), co-founder of *Colectivo Por la Paz y el Desarme* and of the *En Pie de Paz* magazine.

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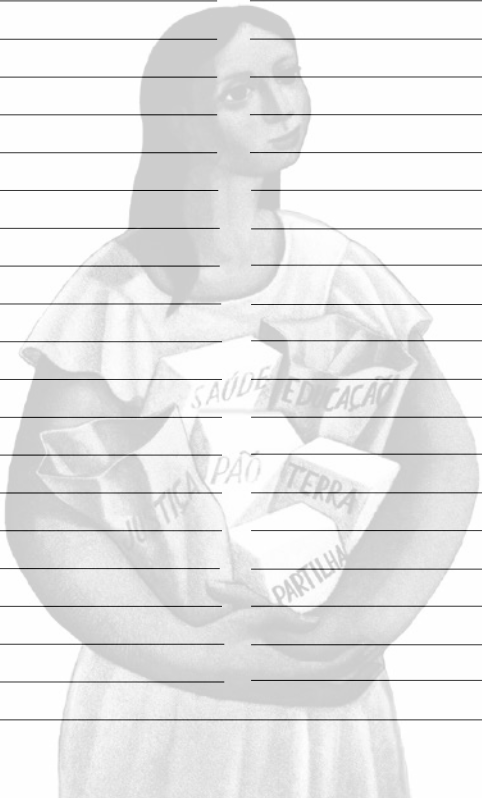
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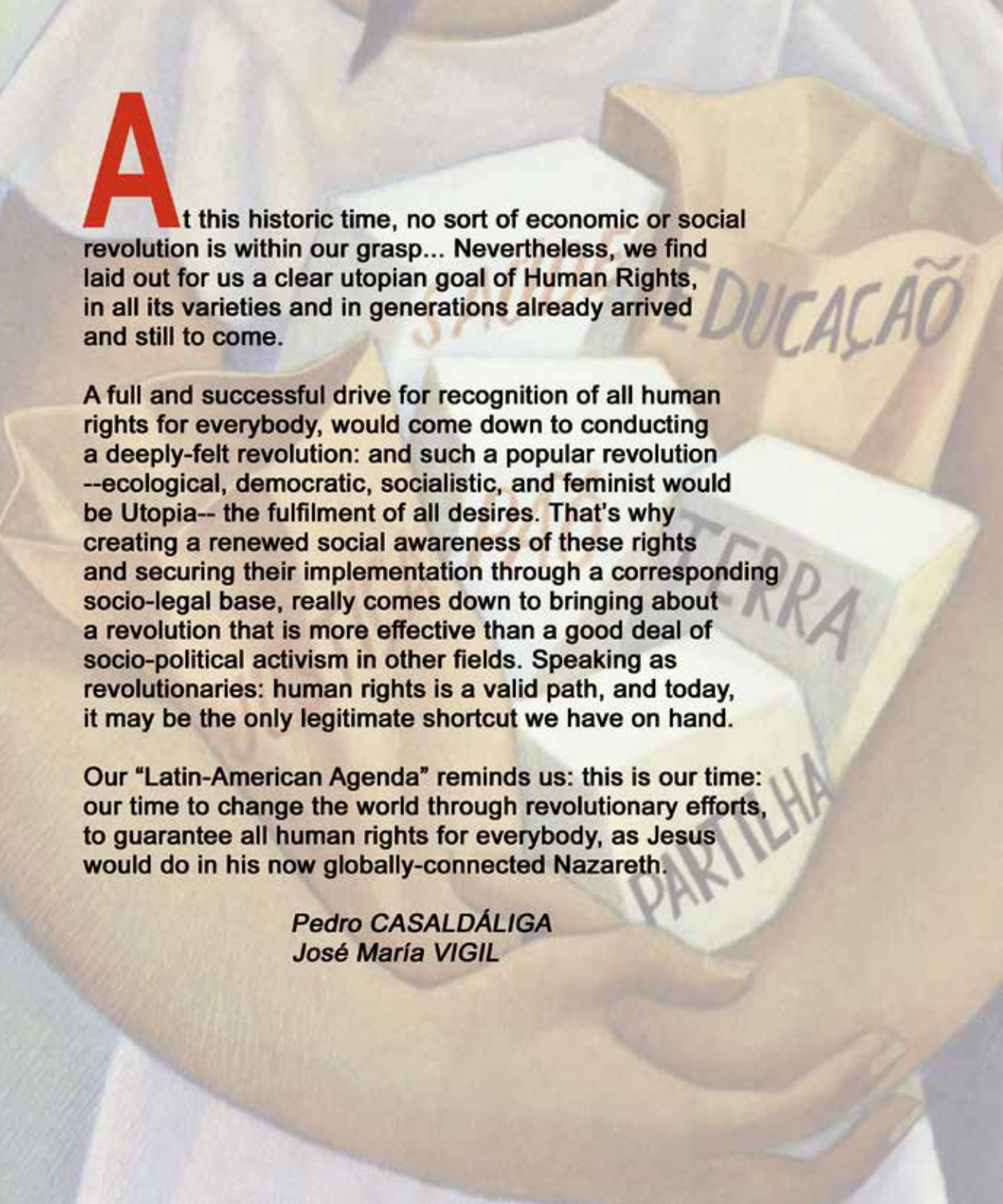
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The background of the page features a stylized illustration of a pair of hands holding several white, rectangular blocks. These blocks are stacked and have various social and environmental slogans written on them in a bold, sans-serif font. The visible slogans include 'SAÚDE' (Health), 'EDUCAÇÃO' (Education), 'TERRA' (Earth), and 'PARTILHA' (Share). The hands are rendered in a soft, painterly style with warm tones. The overall composition suggests themes of social justice, education, and environmental stewardship.

At this historic time, no sort of economic or social revolution is within our grasp... Nevertheless, we find laid out for us a clear utopian goal of Human Rights, in all its varieties and in generations already arrived and still to come.

A full and successful drive for recognition of all human rights for everybody, would come down to conducting a deeply-felt revolution: and such a popular revolution --ecological, democratic, socialistic, and feminist would be Utopia-- the fulfilment of all desires. That's why creating a renewed social awareness of these rights and securing their implementation through a corresponding socio-legal base, really comes down to bringing about a revolution that is more effective than a good deal of socio-political activism in other fields. Speaking as revolutionaries: human rights is a valid path, and today, it may be the only legitimate shortcut we have on hand.

Our "Latin-American Agenda" reminds us: this is our time: our time to change the world through revolutionary efforts, to guarantee all human rights for everybody, as Jesus would do in his now globally-connected Nazareth.

Pedro CASALDÁLIGA
José María VIGIL