



Newsletter

"Service of and witness to the faith are necessary for salvation"

-CCC § 1816

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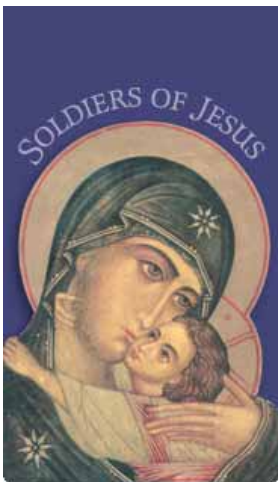
Website: www.pjpiioe.org – E-mail: pjpiioe@earthlink.net – Tel: (760) 488-2919

Special Edition

Miles Jesu — Path to Rome Conference in Mexico City

Society President, Victor R. Claveau, MJ, and Board members Bob Paez and Fred Hernandez attended the Miles Jesu, Path to Rome Conference in Mexico City from Nov. 2-4, 2008.

Miles Jesu



Miles Jesu (Latin for *Soldier of Jesus*) is a form of consecrated life in the Catholic Church for the laity, known as an *Ecclesial Family of Consecrated Life*, whose purpose is "to instill Catholic ideals and goals in the world to further the Kingdom of Christ, making Him the Center of all human life". The Holy Father himself is consistently promoting such forms of consecrated life as something especially inspired by the Holy Spirit for the needs of our times. Miles Jesu works to promote

unity and harmony in the Church by spreading the teachings of the Vicar of Christ.

"You Are Soldiers"

Pope John Paul II called Miles Jesu 'soldiers' ... the front-line soldiers who are essential in bringing the Catholic faith and Christ to the world. Miles Jesu is active in many countries around the globe, bringing Christ to the poor by meeting both their bodily and spiritual needs. We sponsor soup kitchens, boys' and girls' towns, medical missions, vocation discernment retreats, schools, conferences and much, much more.

Please take some time to explore our [site](#); we have much to offer you on your spiritual journey. If you have questions about Miles Jesu or how you can assist one of our ministries, please [contact us](#).

"Not to us, Lord, not to us, but to Thy Name be the Glory!" (PS. 115:1)

Path to Rome Conference

The conference roster included such notable prelates as **His Eminence Cardinal Francis Arinze**, Prefect of the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, Vatican; **His Eminence Darío Cardinal Castrillón Hoyos**, President of Pontifical Commission Ecclesia Dei, Vatican; **H.E. Norberto Cardinal Rivera Carrera**, Archbishop Primate of Mexico; **Mons. Jonas Guerrero**, Auxiliary Bishop of Mexico City; **His Excellency Bishop Vann**, Bishop of Fort Worth, Texas, as well as **Her Imperial and Royal Highness Archduchess Alexandra of Austria**, Vice President of Path to Rome and granddaughter of Blessed Charles of Austria; **Kristine and Martin**

Franklin Former Protestant missionaries to Latin America; **Hanzel Carlos Cardoso Luna**, convert from the Evangelical Church; **Miguel Rivera and Constantino Raúl Vargas Alvares**, converts from Jehovah's Witnesses; and **Victor R. Claveau, MJ**.



Bob Paez and Victor R. Claveau, MJ with His Eminence Cardinal Francis Arinze



(L to R) Victor Claveau, Fr. Mark Gelis, MJ, General Director of Miles Jesu, His Eminence Darío Cardinal Castrillón Hoyos, and Society Board Member, Bob Paez.



Society President Victor R. Claveau, MJ delivering the first of his two lectures.

Victor's first presentation covered his background, involvement with Miles Jesu, and the founding of the Pope John Paul II Society of Evangelists. His second address was focused on practical evangelization and apologetics.

The conference was a huge success. Attendees came from all over the Americas and Europe. The hotel accommodations and food were superb.

We were able to provide each of the prelates and dignitaries with information about the Pope John Paul II Society of Evangelists and School of Evangelization.

By far, the highlight of the trip was the visit to both the old and new Basilicas of Our Lady of Guadalupe and Mass at the main altar of the new Basilica.



Old Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe in Villa de Guadalupe Hidalgo, Mex.

"I wish that a temple be erected here quickly, so I may therein exhibit and give all my love, compassion, help, and protection. Because I am your merciful mother, to you, and to all the inhabitants on this land and all the rest who love me, invoke and confide in me; to listen there to their lamentations, and remedy all their miseries, afflictions and sorrows. And to accomplish what my clemency pretends, go to the palace of the bishop of Mexico, and you will say to him that I manifest my great desire, that here on this plain a temple be built to me."

Words of Our Lady to Saint Juan Diego (Nican Mopohua)



Present-day Basilica of Guadalupe

For a panoramic view of the interior of the Basilica go to the following link:

<http://geoimages.berkeley.edu/worldwidepanorama/wp1205/html/AlfredoMora.html>

During Holy Mass we commended all the members of the Society to our Lady. I am certain that she supports our evangelization efforts and will give each of us a very special blessing. I wish you all could have been with us in that holy place, which has meant so much for the history and the growth of the Church on the American continent.

Our Lady of Guadalupe



Actual Tilma Image of Our Lady of Guadalupe

Our Lady of Guadalupe appeared in Mexico as the pregnant Mother of God to Saint Juan Diego, a Chicemeca Indian, on December 9, 10 and 12, 1531. She left a Miraculous Image of her appearance on his cactus fiber cloak, or "tilma", which still exists today for all to see in the Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe in Mexico City.

Background

Mesoamerica, the New World, 1521: The capital city of the Aztec empire falls under the Spanish forces. Less than 20 years later, 9 million of the inhabitants of the land, who professed for centuries a polytheistic and human sacrificing religion, are converted to Christianity. What

happened in those times that produced such an incredible and historically unprecedented conversion?



Tepeyac Hill

In 1531 a "Lady from Heaven" appeared to a humble Native American at Tepeyac, a hill northwest of what is now Mexico City.

She identified herself as the ever virgin Holy Mary, Mother of the True God for whom we live, of the Creator of all things, Lord of heaven and the earth.

She made a request for a church to be built on the site, and submitted her wish to the local Bishop. When the Bishop hesitated, and requested her for a sign, the Mother of God obeyed without delay or question, sending Her native messenger to the top of the hill in mid-December to gather an assortment of roses for the Bishop.



St. Juan Diego

After complying to the Bishop's request for a sign, She also left for us an image of herself imprinted miraculously on the native's *tilma*, a poor quality cactus-cloth, which should have deteriorated in 20 years but shows no sign of decay 475 years later and still defies all scientific explanations of its origin.

It apparently even reflects in Her eyes what was in front of her in 1531.

Her message of love and compassion, and her universal promise of help and protection to all mankind, as well as the story of the apparitions, are described in

the "Nican Mopohua", a 16th century document written in the native Nahuatl language.

There is reason to believe that at Tepeyac Mary came in her glorified body, and her actual physical hands rearranged the roses in Juan Diego's tilma, which makes this apparition very special.

An incredible list of miracles, cures and interventions are attributed to Her. Yearly, an estimated 14 million visit her Basilica, making her Mexico City home the most popular Marian shrine and the most visited Catholic sanctuary in the whole world.

Altogether 25 popes have officially honored Our Lady of Guadalupe. His Holiness John Paul II visited her Sanctuary four times: on his first apostolic trip outside Rome as Pope in 1979, and again in 1990, 1999 and 2002.

The Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe is celebrated on December 12th. In 1999, Pope John Paul II, in his homily from the Solemn Mass at the Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe, during his third visit to the sanctuary, declared the date of December the 12th as a Liturgical Holy Day for the whole continent.

During the same visit Pope John Paul II entrusted the cause of life to her loving protection, and placed under her motherly care the innocent lives of children, especially those who are in danger of not being born.

Source: <http://www.sancta.org>. Used with permission.

What do the symbols mean in the Our Lady of Guadalupe image?

The 450-year-old image of Our Lady of Guadalupe is more than simply a picture. It contains symbols -- in a sense, hieroglyphics, or a story in pictures -- that reveal part of the message the Blessed Mother brought through Juan Diego to the Indians of Mexico and to all the people of the Americas. But the symbols had a special meaning to the Indians, who because of their culture could decipher the code in the Image.

Eyes: The eyes of the image are looking down, a posture of humility, revealing that, as great as she is, she is not a god. Indian gods never looked down; they looked straight ahead.

Face: The woman's face shows great compassion. The Indians felt that the face was the window of the inner person, a means by which one could read who a person was -- the way a person would act. A good woman to the Indians was one whose femininity showed in her face. The head of the woman in the image shows her with dark skin and dark hair like that of the Indians.

Hands: Her hands are not poised in the traditional Western style of prayer, but in an Indian manner of

offering, indicating that something is being offered, that something is to come from her.

Maternity Band: The maternity band around the woman's waist was the sign of a pregnant woman, a mother who is about to give birth, it was a sign to the Indians that someone is yet to come.

Stars: The stars on the mantle are a sign that a new civilization, or era, is beginning. The Indian tradition recognized the end and the beginning of different eras throughout the ages, and the destruction of a particular civilization or era was always accompanied by a comet, or a body of stars. Indian prophets even before the arrival and conquest by the Spaniard Hernan Cortes had been predicting the end of their civilization at that time.

Sun Rays: The rays of sun in the image recalled for the Indians that the sun played a key role in their civilization. But the woman in the image is greater than even the sun. She hides the sun, and only the rays come forth. She hides the sun but does not extinguish it.

Mantel: The predominant color in the image's mantle is turquoise, the blue-green color reserved for the great god Omecihuatl. Although the Indians had many "intermediary gods." Omecihuatl was considered the supreme god. It was a mother-father god who sometimes was represented as a man and sometimes as a woman. It was a source of unity for everything that exists.

Moon: The woman is standing on the moon, indicating that she is greater than the god of night, the moon god.

"Angel": The "angel" at the bottom of the image was seen by the Indians as an "intermediary god" carrying in a new era, the beginning of a new civilization. One era was at an end -- had died -- and a new one was beginning, was being born.

Pontifical Pronouncements on the Virgin of Guadalupe

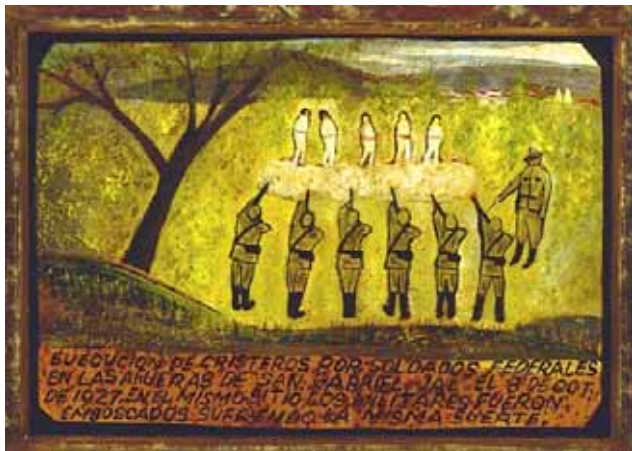
With the Brief *Non est equidem* of May 25, 1754, Pope Benedict XIV declared Our Lady of Guadalupe patron of what was then called New Spain, corresponding to Spanish Central and Northern America, and approved liturgical texts for the Mass and Liturgy of the Hours in her honor. Pope Leo XIII granted new texts in 1891 and authorized coronation of the image in 1895. Pope Saint Pius X proclaimed her patron of Latin America in 1910. In 1935 Pope Pius XI proclaimed her patron of the Philippines and had a monument in her honor erected in the Vatican Gardens. Pope Pius XII declared the Virgin of Guadalupe "Queen of Mexico and Empress of the Americas" in 1945, and "Patroness of the Americas" in 1946. Pope John XXIII invoked her as "Mother of the Americas" in 1961, referring to her as Mother and

Teacher of the Faith of All American populations, and in 1966 Pope Paul VI sent a Golden Rose to the shrine.

Pope John Paul II visited the shrine in the course of his first journey outside Italy as Pope from 26 to January 31, 1979, and again when he beatified Juan Diego there on 6 May 1990. In 1992 he dedicated to Our Lady of Guadalupe a chapel within St. Peter's Basilica in the Vatican. At the request of the Special Assembly for the Americas of the Synod of Bishops, he named Our Lady of Guadalupe patron of the Americas on January 22, 1999 (with the result that her liturgical celebration had, throughout the Americas, the rank of Solemnity), and visited the shrine again on the following day. On July 31, 2002, he canonized Juan Diego before a crowd of 12 million, and later that year included in the General Calendar of the Roman Rite, as optional memorials, the liturgical celebrations of Saint Juan Diego Cuauhtlatoatzin (December 9) and Our Lady of Guadalupe (12 December).

Source: Notitiae, bulletin of the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, 2002, pages 194-195.

Mexican Martyrdom



Artist: Unknown; Title: *Martyrdom of Five Cristeros*. Translated Inscription: Execution of Cristeros by federal soldiers on the outskirts of San Gabriel, Jalisco, October 8, 1927. On the same site, the soldiers were ambushed, suffering the same fate. Date: 1927.

Blessed Miguel Pro and the Mexican Martyrs

On 31 July 1926, a law persecuting the Church came into force in Mexico. It had been promulgated on the 14th of June by President Plutarco Elias Calles.

On 27 October 1926, the same President of the Republic enacted a new set of regulations governing Article 130 of the Federal Constitution. These governing regulations further specified and rendered even more

intolerant the provisions contained in the aforementioned document:

"The purpose of the present initiative is precisely to make up for these deficiencies and to realize the goals of the Constitution in the area of public cult and external discipline.

To this effect, the various articles of the bill submitted for your examination sanction punishments against those who do not observe the prohibitions contained in the said Article 30, as well as against those who do not fulfill the norms it prescribes."

With these words were introduced the specific regulations which violated not only the Church's right to worship, but also the inviolable right of every person to live his or her faith.

With these laws and regulations commenced the deplorable development which constitutes a sad page in the story of Mexico in our century and yet, at the same time, a glorious page in the story of Christianity. As is well-known, these very governing regulations eventually led to the violent death of many Catholics. Faithful to Christ, those men and women deliberately ignored an unjust law and continued to live and practice their faith clandestinely in difficult situations, hunted as they were by the police and deprived of a fundamental right of every person -- their religious liberty.

Among the thousands of persons who paid with their very lives for their devotion to the Lord and the Church was a Jesuit priest, Miguel Agustín Pro. On 23 November 1927, without benefit of a trial, he was executed by a firing squad for the simple reason that he was a zealous and actively committed priest and, as such, hated by the government. As early as October 1926, a warrant of arrest had been issued against him for being a "religious propagandist." Consequently, he was being sought by the police. His spirit and his priestly activity constituted a challenge to the government and the regulations which it had issued.

Blessed Miguel Agustín Pro, SJ is the martyr whose cause and whose story form the prototype for all the Catholics killed during the persecution of the Church in Mexico during the 1920s and 1930s. On the day of his death he forgave his executioners and died proclaiming the reign of Christ the King. Although he was not the first priest to be killed, the publicity surrounding his death and the shocking photographs of his execution brought his case to the eyes of the world. Father Miguel Pro was beatified by Pope John Paul II in 1988.

A group of 25 Mexican martyrs, also killed in hatred of the faith during the turbulent years from 1915 to 1937, were canonized in Rome in May 2000. While the circumstances of their martyrdom are varied, their stories fall into the same pattern as that of Blessed Miguel Pro.

For more information on other martyrs see pamphlet #375.



*Blessed Miguel Pro, S.J.
Photograph taken shortly before his execution.*



Rejecting the traditional blindfold, Miguel stretched his arms out in the form of a cross and facing the firing squad said, "May God have mercy on you. May God bless you. Lord, you know that I am innocent. With all my heart I forgive my enemies."



As the firing squad took aim, Padre Pro spoke his last words. In a firm, clear voice, he said:

"Viva Cristo Rey!"
("Long live Christ the King")



The firing squad was shaken by Padre Pro's unflinching courage and heroism; the bullets wounded, but did not kill him. A soldier walked over and shot him at close range, killing him.



November 24, 1927, at the front of the Jesuit church of the Holy Family, a multitude accompanied the remains of Father Pro. Father Mendez Medina cried out, "Make way for the martyrs of Christ the King!" In response, a great and unanimous cry soared from the hearts and mouths of thousands: "¡Viva Cristo Rey!"



The Martyr in Death



Robert Paez (L) and Victor Claveau kneeling in prayer before the reliquary of Blessed Miguel Pro in Holy Family Church.



Robert Paez and Fred Hernandez (R) before the wall of the Martyrs at the Shrine of St. Jude in Mexico City

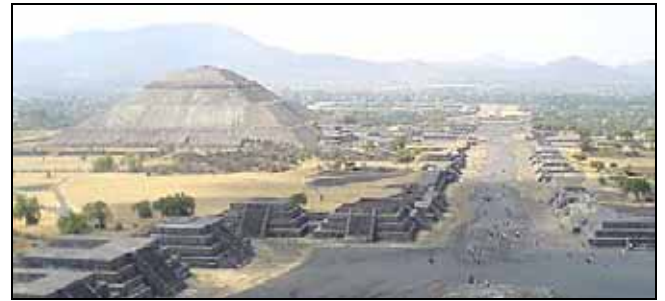


Fred, Victor, and Bob at the Pyramids of Teotihuacan. In Nahuatl, Teotihuacan means 'The City of the Gods', or 'Where Men Become Gods' and is Mexico's largest ancient city.

The Mayan pyramids of Teotihuacan rise as high as twenty-story buildings, above the central Mexican highlands with a grandeur and mystery that stirs the imagination.

Little is known by traditional researchers about the pyramids of Teotihuacan (pronounced tay-oh-tee-wah-

con, and simply referred to as "Teo" by the locals). Built by the Toltecs, Teo was once a city the size of ancient Athens and Rome. It thrived as the primary center of learning and culture in America for over one thousand years, before it was abandoned about fifteen-hundred years ago.



View from the Pyramid of the Sun

Between 450 and 650 AD, Teotihuacan reached the height of its cultural splendor and its population is estimated to have between 150,000 and 200,000 people at its maximum. Teotihuacan was the sixth largest city in the world in AD 600. Besides the major ceremonial pyramids, there were also palaces and temples, especially near the north end of the city surrounding the plaza in front of the Pyramid of the Moon. These included the Palace of Quetzalcoatl, the Butterfly Palace, the Temple of the Feathered Conches, and the Palace of the Jaguars.

The religion of Teotihuacán is similar to those of other Mesoamerican cultures. Many of the same gods were worshiped, including the Feathered Serpent and The Rain god. Teotihuacán was a major religious center, and the priests probably had a great deal of political power. As with other Mesoamerican cultures, Teotihuacáños practiced human sacrifice.



The above figure (Bridgeman Library online) clearly shows the place and the object of Aztec sacrifice. Most of the Aztec sacrifices took place either on the square facing a pyramidal temple or on the pyramidal temple

itself. The object of the sacrifice was the human heart (almost always belonging to prisoners caught in wars) which was then fed to the sun god, to ensure its survival against the ever-powerful forces of the night and stars.

The Aztecs (who were conquered starting 1521 by the Spaniards, led by Cortés) were by far the most vehement in the use of human sacrifice.



Victor Claveau and Senorita Alicia Herrasti

While in Mexico City we visited four churches and were delighted to find racks filled with booklets on numerous subjects of interest to Catholics. The booklets are offered for sale by La Sociedad EVC (El Verdadero Catolicismo), of Mexico City, and have been published by the Herrasti family for over 80 years.

The objective of the Society EVC, founded in 1926 by Germán Herrasti, is to provide the faithful, practical and simple means in order to know and profess the Catholic Religion.

We located the Society's headquarters and introduced ourselves to the current director of the organization, Alicia Herrasti, (Daughter of Germán Herrasti). Senorita Herrasti agreed to allow the Pope John Paul II Society of Evangelists to reproduce these booklets on our website.



Senor Germán Herrasti

Spanish is the official language of 22 countries: Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Puerto Rico (with English), Spain, Uruguay, Venezuela, and Western Sahara (with Arabic).

The 2007 Estimated World Population for the Language is 442,525,601 of which 102 million are Internet users. It is spoken as a first language by about 352 million people, or by 417 million including second-language speakers, the majority of whom live in Latin America and Spain. With close to 106 million first-language speakers, Mexico has the largest population of Spanish-speakers in the world. The four next largest populations reside in Colombia (44 million), Spain (43 million), Argentina (39 million) and U.S. (28 million).

Soon the Spanish speaking population of the world will be able to access Catholic booklets on the Society's website through the generosity of Senorita Herrasti.



(L to R) Victor Claveau, Nicole & Anthony Landreneau, and Bob Paez.

Victor presented an award to Nicole Landreneau in appreciation for her generous donation of time and talent in developing and maintaining our website.