



## Message to the Pilgrim Church of Latin America and the Caribbean

Dear Brothers and Sisters in the Risen Lord:

With a deep amount of gratitude to the Lord of Life we want to communicate to you our joy and hope that has accompanied us at the 39<sup>th</sup> General Ordinary Assembly of the Latin America and the Caribbean Bishops' Council (CELAM0, celebrated from May 15 to May 20 at the Diocese of Mayaguez, Puerto Rico. As pastors that serve the Church, we have seen the closeness in your prayers during this period of discernment, analysis, deliberation, and definition of pastoral horizons that mark the Synodal Path that Pope Francis continues to invite us to travel and that inspire our dreams and projects.

We have been received with kindness and an extraordinary hospitality by the Church of Puerto and his Bishops' Conference, the diocese that has received us and all those who have made possible this fraternal encounter. We express our fidelity and gratitude, specially to Francis our Pope, for his message of trust and closeness to us, and also to Most. Rev. Robert Prevost, the Prefect of the Dicastery of Bishops, for his presence and been able to walk with us through these days.

Under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, we affirm our vocation to live a more full and profound "collegiality, ecclesiology, and synodality" with the purpose of continuing announcing the fullness of life that comes from the Gospel, just as the Assembly's moto says. We came here from different realities from our region with the task of make grateful memory for what we lived through this past term (2019-2023), and discern in community the Lord's call that has been presented for this cycle that starts now (2023-2027).

During these past days we have manifested our closeness, through prayer, to our brother bishops from those particular churches that live moments of trials and tribulations, trusting that it will strength them and will find the permanent light of hope in the Lord, after the dark night.

During this intense journey we have been watchful to the listening of the voice of the People of God that has been present through the challenges that were presented at the First Ecclesial Assembly of Latin America and the Caribbean, the fruits of the regional assemblies at the continental stage of the Synod, the signs of time of the diverse realities of our regions, with their pains and their hopes. Those realities from our communities have marked this cycle of restructuration and renovation of the CELAM.



**39<sup>a</sup> Asamblea General Ordinaria del Celam**  
Colegialidad, eclesialidad, sinodalidad

We have received diverse reports from the fruits of the work that the last presidential body made and they culminate their service following what was asked at the last General Assembly that took place at Tegucigalpa (2019), from the different pastoral centers, all the synodal itineraries in action, and the dedicated and careful management of resources that have empowered themselves for the good of the Church, through the new CELAM headquarters, the house for all.

Also, this Assembly has been a moment to be conscientious and reflect about the difficulties that we have lived during this period. We recognized the frailties that served as a barrier for us to work harder and accompany the People of God that have been apart from Home or lived with a lost of meaning of life and those that have been abandoned or not heard. We recognize the necessity to respond more faithfully to those who suffer exclusion, and we recognize the call to have a voice that respond to those democratic processes that have been discarded, and make a call to the state administrative bodies to prioritize the vocation to serve and the commitment for justice and the attention for the poor, among them, the migrants. We feel the call to take possession of the polarization and the imposition of ideologies that disintegrates our societies. And, finally, we have put a lot of attention to all the voices that have been calling us to not give up on Jesus, in the preaching of the Gospel of Hope and the service to the Holy People of God.

We ask to all of you to join this Assembly and express our thanksgiving and prayers to the CELAM's New Presidential Body that has been elected: his president: Most. Rev. Jaime Spengler, OFM, from Brazil; First Vicepresident: Most. Rev. José Luiz Azuaje, from Venezuela; Second Vicepresident: Most. Rev. José Domingo Ulloa, from Panamá; the President of the Economic Affairs Council: Most. Rev. Santiago Rodríguez, from Dominican Republic; and the Secretary General: Most. Rev. Lizardo Estrada from Perú. May the Lord be auspicious, sustains you, and accompany you on this important mission that starts right now. Our sincere gratitude to the Last Term's Presidential Body and all the people that have collaborated with them, that with a solid faithful foundation and permanent commitment has give a good service to the Church.

We put ourselves under the guidance of Our Lady of Guadalupe, our mother and guide of our Church, all the good purposes of this Assembly so that, as we recognize ourselves as his/her children, baptized on our Lord Jesus Christ, we may be capable of sharing the Light of the Gospel that illumines the whole Continent and allows us to walk together more than ever as a Church at the service of the Kingdom of God.

***Aguadilla, Diocese of Mayaguez, Puerto Rico  
May 19, 2023***

***39° General Ordinary Assembly  
Latin America and the Caribbean Bishops' Council***