

Special Assembly for America - Encounter with the Living Jesus Christ: the Way to Conversion, Communion and Solidarity in America (6 November-12 December 1997)

Special Assembly for America of the Synod of Bishops

In Session: 16 November - 12 December 1997

Synod Fathers: 233

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

In the Apostolic Letter *Tertio millennio adveniente*, the Holy Father made known his desire to continue the Synodal movement on the continental level, beginning with the Special Assemblies for Europe (1991) and Africa (1994), and to convene special Synodal assemblies, including the Special Assembly for America, as part of the program leading to the celebration of the Jubilee Year 2000. On 12 June 1995, a Pre-Synodal Council was appointed to collaborate in the preparations of the special assembly. With its assistance, the *Lineamenta* was published on 3 September 1996 and the *Instrumentum laboris* on 10 September 1997.

During the assembly, the Synod Fathers took into consideration the various features of Church life and society on the American continent and sought the best ways and means of allowing the people of America to encounter Jesus Christ. In this regard, they discussed the relation between the Gospel and culture and the main concepts of conversion, communion and solidarity in meeting the great challenges of contemporary society on the continent. At the conclusion of the special assembly the Synod Fathers published the customary *Nuntius* or "Message to the People of God".

A Post-Synodal Council, elected during the assembly, met on various occasions to evaluate the results of the Synod and to offer assistance to the Holy Father in drafting the *Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation "Ecclesia in America"* of 22 January 1999, which was promulgated by the Holy Father, 23 January 1999, during the celebration phase of the special assembly in Mexico City, Mexico. On the following day, many Synodal participants from all parts of the continent were present for the Eucharistic Liturgy celebrated in the Shrine of Our Lady of Guadeloupe.

Subsequently, the Post-Synodal Council has met at various times to evaluate the implementation of the document and to offer encouragement to the bishops in their initiatives on the continent in response to the post-Synodal document. In 2002, a *Report* in this matter was prepared and sent to each member of the hierarchy in America, the heads of the dicasteries of the Roman Curia, the Patriarchs, Major Archbishops and Metropolitans of the Eastern Churches *sui iuris*, the presidents of the episcopal conferences worldwide and other interested parties. The Special Council meets periodically to continue to discuss the priority issues on the continent set forth in the *Report*.

President-Delegates

S.Em.R. il Sig. Card. Eugênio de Araújo Sales, Arcivescovo di São Sebastião do Rio de Janeiro (Brasile)

S.Em.R. il Sig. Card. Roger Michael Mahony, Arcivescovo di Los Angeles (USA)

S.E.R. Mons. Darío Castrillón Hoyos, Prefetto della Congregazione per il Clero (Vaticano)

General Secretary

S.Em.R. il Sig. Card. Jan Pieter Schotte, C.I.C.M. (Vaticano)

General Rapporteur

S.Em.R. il Sig. Card. Juan Sandoval Íñiguez, Arcivescovo di Guadalajara (Messico)

Special Secretaries

S.E.R. Mons. Francis Eugene George, O.M.I., Arcivescovo di Chicago (USA)

S.E.R. Mons. Estanislao Esteban Karlic, Arcivescovo di Paraná (Argentina)

Documents of the Special Assembly for America

Esortazione Apostolica Postsinodale *Ecclesia in America*[DE - EN - ES - FR - IT - PT]

Synodus Episcoporum (Bollettino della Commissione per l'informazione dell'Assemblea Speciale per l'America)

[Francese, Inglese, Italiano, Spagnolo]

Assemblea Speciale per l'America, 1997: Instrumentum Laboris

[Francese, Inglese, Portoghese, Spagnolo]

Assemblea Speciale per l'America, 1996: Lineamenta

[Francese, Inglese, Portoghese, Spagnolo]

