

STATEMENT OF MOST REVEREND RICHARD E. PATES, CHAIR OF THE USCCB
COMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL JUSTICE AND PEACE, DELIVERED AT THE GENERAL
COORDINATING MEETING OF THE CONSEJO EPISCOPAL LATINOAMERICANO (CELAM)

JULY 29-AUGUST 1, 2013

RIO DE JANEIRO, BRAZIL

My dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

In the name of Cardinal Timothy Dolan, President of the Bishops' Conference of the United States, and also on behalf of my brother bishops of the Catholic Bishops' Conference, I extend my sincere expression of gratitude and solidarity. It is an honor to express my support for the prophetic testimony of CELAM, which has benefited all America. I came to demonstrate a visible expression of this support from your brothers in the North, and to learn from you and share our experiences, in the name of Jesus Christ.

On behalf of the U.S. Conference, I also want to express our gratitude for the great gift you have given us in Pope Francisco, whom the Church of Latin America has extended to the universal Church. His message about the poor, humility, social justice, mercy and profound personal encounter with Jesus Christ our Savior resonates powerfully in the United States. As is evident from his leadership of World Youth Day, he is inspiring many around the world to share the New Evangelization.

We recognize the role CELAM accepted in formulating this message, especially through the work of the conference in Aparecida and documents that have given the New Evangelization an important content. The fruit of Aparecida will continue to inspire the life of the church for many decades. We are all in your debt as a consequence of this blessing and the inspiration we have received in being disciple missionaries.

The Church in the United States appreciates, too, the impressive priests and religious who have come from Latin America, and the ministry that they have provided. In the same way, we give thanks for all individuals of Hispanic origin who have immigrated to our country and have been a blessing for our country and our Church. The Spirit of a deep faith, along with a dedication to family and a strong work ethic, has enriched us. We are dedicated to carrying out an immigration reform in the United States that will obtain for these brothers and sisters the dignity they deserve.

We wish to work together with CELAM to communicate in new ways the exchange of data and information on topics of mutual interest. The problems of drugs, mining and extractives, arms, the environment and immigration are common to all our nations. Let us seek possible answers with you for the good of our people and our Church.

Finally, with all my sincerity, I pray with you that the Virgin Mary will always keep us in her

protection and bless us with her inspiration. May Our Lady of Aparecida give us her help, and may Our Lady of Guadalupe, who is the Mother of all the peoples of America, grant that we may really be One Church, and One America.

Many Thanks