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LE UDIENZE

Il Santo Padre ha ricevuto questa mattina in Udienza:

S.E. il Signor Carlos Rafael Conrado Marion-Landais Castillo, Ambasciatore della Repubblica Dominicana presso la Santa Sede, in occasione della presentazione delle Lettere Credenziali;

Gruppo degli Ecc.mi Presuli della Conferenza Episcopale del Sudan, in Visita "ad Limina Apostolorum";

Ecc.mi Presuli della Conferenza Episcopale di Francia, in Visita "ad Limina Apostolorum":

Em.mo Card. Bernard Panafieu, Arcivescovo di Marseille

con l'Ausiliare:

S.E. Mons. Benoît Rivière, Vescovo tit. di Acque Albe di Mauritania;

S.E. Mons. Claude Feidt, Vescovo di Aix.

[01984-01.01]

LE LETTERE CREDENZIALI DELL'AMBASCIATORE DELLA REPUBBLICA DOMINICANA PRESSO LA SANTA SEDE. S.E. IL SIGNOR CARLOS RAFAEL CONRADO MARION-LANDAIS CASTILLO

Alle ore 11 di questa mattina, il Santo Padre ha ricevuto in Udienza, in occasione della presentazione delle Lettere Credenziali, S.E. il Signor Carlos Rafael Conrado Marion-Landais Castillo, Ambasciatore della Repubblica Dominicana presso la Santa Sede.

Pubblichiamo di seguito il discorso che il Santo Padre ha rivolto al nuovo Ambasciatore nonché i cenni biografici essenziali di S.E. il Signor Carlos Rafael Conrado Marion-Landais Castillo:

• DISCORSO DEL SANTO PADRE

Señor Embajador:

1. Le recibo con mucho gusto en este solemne acto de presentación de las Cartas Credenciales que le acreditan como Embajador Extraordinario y Plenipotenciario de la República Dominicana ante la Santa Sede, y le agradezco sinceramente las amables palabras que ha tenido a bien dirigirme.

Le quedo muy reconocido por sus expresiones de felicitación con motivo de la reciente celebración del los XXV años de mi elección a la Cátedra de San Pedro, a la cual el Supremo Pastor quiso llamarme para prestar este servicio a la Iglesia y, por extensión, a la humanidad. Por eso, le agradezco mucho sus oraciones para que Dios me siga confortando con su ayuda en el ejercicio de este ministerio eclesial.

2. Vuestra Excelencia viene a representar a una Nación que, como ha recordado Usted en su discurso, se siente profundamente católica. Sobre el suelo de lo que es hoy la República Dominicana se celebró la primera Misa en los inicios de la Evangelización del continente americano, y más tarde se administraron los primeros bautismos de indígenas. Con estos dos Sacramentos crece y se edifica la Iglesia de Cristo y así se puede decir que fue en la Isla Hispaniola donde nació la Iglesia católica en América. Desde allí partieron luego los evangelizadores hacia la tierra firme americana; aquellos hombres que iban a anunciar a Jesucristo, a defender la dignidad inviolable y los derechos de los pueblos indígenas, a favorecer su promoción integral y la hermandad entre todos los miembros de la gran familia humana.

En un período relativamente corto los senderos de la fe atravesaron la geografía dominicana. El Papa Julio II apenas iniciado el siglo XVI erigió en la Isla Hispaniola la Iglesia Metropolitana de Yaguatae, con las sufragáneas de Bainoa y Maguá, primeras del Nuevo Mundo. Estas diócesis fueron sin embargo suprimidas tiempo después y el mismo Pontífice el 8 de agosto de 1511 erigiría definitivamente las diócesis de Santo Domingo, Concepción de la Vega y San Juan, como sufragáneas de la Sede Metropolitana de Sevilla. Para celebrar esos quinientos años de existencia el Episcopado dominicano prepara un Plan Nacional de Pastoral de Evangelización, al que deseo desde ahora los mejores frutos.

En estos cinco siglos la Iglesia ha acompañado el caminar del pueblo dominicano, anunciándole los principios cristianos, que son fuente de sólida esperanza e infunden un renovado dinamismo a la sociedad, y llevando a

cabo su obra de evangelización y promoción humana, acciones que no se contraponen sino que están íntimamente vinculadas, pues "la promoción humana ha de ser la consecuencia lógica de la evangelización, la cual tiende a la liberación integral de la persona" (Discurso en Santo Domingo, 12.X.1992, 13).

3. La Santa Sede se complace por las buenas relaciones entre la Iglesia y el Estado, y formula fervientes votos para que continúen incrementándose en el futuro. Existe un amplio campo en el que confluyen y se interrelacionan las propias competencias y acciones, tal como recoge el Concilio Vaticano II.

Es justo reconocer la acción llevada a cabo en su País a través de las diócesis, las parroquias, las comunidades religiosas y los movimientos de apostolado. Deseo, al respecto, mencionar la acción eclesial en favor de los discapacitados, los enfermos de sida, las minorías étnicas, los emigrantes y refugiados. También es motivo de gozo la presencia de la Iglesia en el campo educativo, a través de una Universidad Pontificia en Santiago con un recinto también en la Ciudad Capital, cuatro Universidades Católicas, varios Institutos Técnicos, Institutos Politécnicos Femeninos y casi trescientos Centros educativos y escuelas parroquiales. Además otras instituciones de la Iglesia católica ofrecen una aportación significativa en el esfuerzo común por fomentar una sociedad más justa y atenta a las necesidades de sus miembros más débiles.

4. Aunque en su servicio a la sociedad no le incumbe a la Iglesia proponer soluciones de orden político y técnico, sin embargo debe y quiere señalar las motivaciones y orientaciones que provienen del Evangelio para iluminar la búsqueda de respuestas y soluciones. En la raíz de los males sociales, económicos y políticos de los pueblos suele estar el repudio u olvido de los genuinos valores éticos, espirituales y trascendentes. Es misión de la Iglesia recordarlos, defenderlos y consolidarlos, particularmente en el momento actual, en el que causas internas y externas han producido en su país un grave deterioro y un cierto descenso de la calidad de vida de los dominicanos. En la solución de esos problemas no debe olvidarse que el bien común es el objetivo a conseguir, para lo cual, la Iglesia, sin pretender competencias ajenas a su misión, presta su colaboración al gobierno y a la sociedad.

En el mundo de hoy no basta limitarse a la ley del mercado y su globalización; hay que fomentar la solidaridad, evitando los males que se derivan de un capitalismo que pone el lucro por encima de la persona y la hace víctima de tantas injusticias. Un modelo de desarrollo que no tuviera presente y no afrontara con decisión esas desigualdades no podría prosperar de ningún modo.

Los que más sufren en las crisis son siempre los pobres. Por eso, deben ser el objetivo especial de los desvelos y atención del Estado. La lucha contra la pobreza no debe reducirse a mejorar simplemente sus condiciones de vida, sino a sacarlos de esa situación creando fuentes de empleo y asumiendo su causa como propia. Es importante incidir en la importancia de la educación y la formación como elementos en la lucha contra la pobreza, así como en el respeto de los derechos fundamentales, que no pueden ser sacrificados en aras de otros objetivos, pues eso atentaría contra la verdadera dignidad del ser humano.

5. Antes de concluir este encuentro deseo expresarle, Señor Embajador, mi cercanía a todos los afectados por el terremoto del pasado mes de septiembre y las recientes inundaciones. Deseo alabar la solidaridad efectiva de las otras regiones de la misma República Dominicana y de otros Países del Caribe. Pido al Señor que conceda a los damnificados fortaleza y capacidad de entrega generosa para hacer frente a las devastaciones sufridas y que no les falte, con prontitud, la ayuda necesaria para poder continuar la vida ordinaria.

6. Finalmente me complace formularle mis mejores votos para que la misión que hoy inicia sea fecunda en copiosos frutos y éxitos. Le ruego, de nuevo, que se haga intérprete de mis sentimientos y esperanzas ante el Señor Presidente de la República y las demás las Autoridades de su País, mientras invoco la bendición de Dios, por intercesión de la Virgen de Altagracia, que venerada desde 1541 acompaña con su presencia amorosa a los fieles de esa noble Nación, sobre Usted, sobre su distinguida familia y colaboradores, y sobre los amadísimos hijos dominicanos.

S.E. il Signor Carlos Rafael Conrado Marion-Landais **Ambasciatore della Repubblica Dominicana presso la Santa Sede**

E' nato il 13 agosto 1940 a Santo Domingo.

E' sposato ed ha quattro figli.

Si è laureato presso l'Università Autonoma di Santo Domingo in Ingegneria Civile (1962) ed in Pedagogia (1968).

Oltre a svolgere la libera professione di ingegnere civile, ha ricoperto, tra gli altri, i seguenti incarichi: Docente di matematica presso l'Università Autonoma di Santo Domingo (1963-1993); Presidente della Raffineria Dominicana del Petrolio (1986-1987); Segretario di Stato per l'Industria ed il Commercio (1987-1988); Vice-Presidente della Compagnia Aerea Dominicana (1989-1994); Membro fondatore dell'Istituto Tecnologico di Santo Domingo (1972) del quale è stato Rettore dal 1990 al 1993; Consultore dei Ministeri per l'Educazione, le Belle Arti ed il Culto (1995-1996); Gerente del Programma di Costruzione di Scuole Elementari (1999-2003);

E' stato Membro fondatore, Presidente e Membro del Consiglio di Amministrazione della Fondazione San José, che si dedica alle persone meno abbienti ed allo sviluppo delle famiglie contadine.

Parla inglese, tedesco, francese, italiano e portoghese.

[01985-04.02] [Texto original: Español]

VISITA "AD LIMINA APOSTOLORUM" DEI PRESULI DELLA CONFERENZA EPISCOPALE DEL SUDAN

Pubblichiamo di seguito il discorso che il Santo Padre Giovanni Paolo II ha rivolto agli Ecc.mi Presuli della Conferenza Episcopale del Sudan, incontrati questa mattina e ricevuti nei giorni scorsi, in separate udienze, in occasione della Visita "ad Limina Apostolorum":

● DISCORSO DEL SANTO PADRE

Dear Brother Bishops,

1. "May the Lord of peace himself give you peace at all times in all ways" (2 Th 3:16). At this decisive moment for your country, as two decades of violent conflict and bloodshed seem poised to give way to reconciliation and pacification, I greet you, the members of the Sudan Catholic Bishops' Conference, with these words of the Apostle Paul, words of comfort and reassurance, words founded on the Word who is "the life and the light of men" (cf. Jn 1:4), Jesus Christ, our hope and our peace.

These days of your visit *ad Limina Apostolorum* are privileged moments of grace during which we strengthen the bonds of fraternal communion and solidarity which unite us in the task of bearing witness to the Good News of salvation. As we reflect together on this mission received from the Lord and on its particular implications for you and your local communities, I wish to call to mind the figures of two intrepid witnesses to the faith, two holy individuals whose lives are intimately connected with your land: Saint Josephine Bakhita and Saint Daniel Comboni. I am convinced that the example of steadfast commitment and of Christian charity given by these two devoted servants of the Lord can shed much light on the present realities facing the Church in your country.

2. From her earliest years Saint Josephine Bakhita knew the cruelty and brutality with which man can treat his fellow man. Abducted and sold into slavery as a young child, she was all too familiar with the suffering and victimization that still afflicts countless men and women in her homeland and throughout Africa and the world. Her life inspires the firm resolve to work effectively to free people from oppression and violence, ensuring that their human dignity is respected in the full exercise of their rights. It is this same resolve that must guide the

Church in the Sudan today as the nation makes the transition from hostility and conflict to peace and concord. Saint Bakhita is a shining advocate of authentic emancipation. Her life clearly shows that tribalism and forms of discrimination based on ethnic origin, language and culture do not belong in a civilized society and have absolutely no place in the community of believers.

The Church in your country is acutely aware of the hardships and pain that afflict those fleeing war and violence — especially women and children — and she mobilizes not only her own resources in helping to meet their needs but also draws on the generosity of outside volunteers and benefactors. Particularly noteworthy in this regard is the work of Sudanaid, the national relief agency overseen by the Aid and Development Department of your Bishops' Conference, which rightly enjoys widespread esteem for the various charitable projects in which it is engaged. Brothers, I would suggest that a solid basis for seeking Church representation in the process of normalization currently underway can be found precisely in the much-needed assistance that she lends to the many refugees and displaced persons who have been forced from their homes and family lands.

Moreover, the many contributions that the Church makes to your country's social and cultural life can help you to establish closer and more positive relationships with national institutions. A tentative opening on the part of civil leadership can already be seen in the presence of Christians in the current government, and in the reactivation of the Commission for Interreligious Dialogue. You should do all that you can to encourage this, even as you insist that religious pluralism, as guaranteed by the Sudanese Constitution, should be respected.

An important corollary in this regard is your duty to address significant issues that touch upon the country's social, economic, political and cultural life (cf. *Ecclesia in Africa*, No. 110). As you know so well, it belongs to the Church to speak out unambiguously on behalf of those who have no voice and to be a leaven of peace and solidarity, particularly where these ideals are most fragile and threatened. As Bishops, your words and actions are never to be the expression of individual political preferences but must always reflect the attitude of Christ the Good Shepherd.

3. With this image of the Good Shepherd in mind, I turn now to the figure of Saint Daniel Comboni, who, as a missionary priest and Bishop, worked tirelessly to make Christ known and welcomed in Central Africa, including the Sudan. Saint Daniel was keenly concerned that Africans should have a key role in evangelizing the continent, and he was inspired to draft a missionary blueprint for the region — a "plan for the rebirth of Africa" — that enlisted the help of native peoples themselves. In the course of his missionary activity, he did not let the great suffering and many hardships that he endured — privation, exhaustion, illness, mistrust — divert him from the task of preaching the Good News of Jesus Christ.

Bishop Comboni was moreover a strong advocate of inculturating the faith. He took great pains to familiarize himself with the cultures and languages of the local peoples he served. In this way, he was able to present the Gospel in a manner and according to the customs that his listeners readily understood. In a very real way, his life is an example for us today, clearly demonstrating that "the evangelization of culture and the inculturation of the Gospel are an integral part of the new evangelization and thus a specific concern of the episcopal office" (*Pastores Gregis*, No. 30).

Brothers, it is this same apostolic fervour, missionary zeal and deep concern for the salvation of souls that must be a hallmark of your own ministry as Bishops. Make it your first and foremost duty to care for the flock entrusted to you, looking after its spiritual and physical well-being, spending time with the faithful, in particular with your priests and the religious in your Dioceses. The pastoral ministry of the Bishop, in fact, "finds expression in his 'being for' the other members of the faithful while not detracting from his 'being with' them" (*Pastores Gregis*, No. 10).

In all this, yours must be an invitation, gentle yet insistent, to conversion, the conversion of hearts and minds. Faith grows to maturity as Christ's disciples are educated and formed in a thorough and systematic knowledge of his person and message (cf. *Catechesi Tradendae*, No. 19). Thus, the continuing formation of the laity is a priority in your mission as preachers and teachers. Spiritual and doctrinal formation should aim at helping the lay faithful to carry out their prophetic role in a society which does not always recognize or accept the truth and

values of the Gospel. This is especially the case for your catechists: these dedicated servants of the Word require proper formation, both spiritual and intellectual, as well as moral and material support (cf. *Ecclesia in Africa*, No. 91).

It would also prove helpful if a simple catechism in the language of the people were prepared and made available. Similarly, suitable texts in local languages could be prepared and distributed as a means of presenting Jesus to those who are unfamiliar with the Christian message and as a tool for interreligious dialogue. This could be especially helpful in those areas exempt from *Shari'ah* law, particularly in the Federal Capital of Khartoum. Here too I would like to encourage you to rekindle your efforts to establish a Catholic University in Khartoum. Such an institution would allow the priceless contribution that the Church makes in elementary and secondary education to be brought to bear also in the area of higher education. A Catholic University would also be of great assistance in helping you to fulfil your duty of seeing that properly trained teachers are available to impart Christian instruction in the public schools.

4. Turning to those who assist you most closely in your pastoral ministry, I urge you always to cherish your priests with a special love and to regard them as precious co-workers and friends (cf. *Christus Dominus*, No. 16). Their formation must be such that they are ready to put aside all earthly ambition in order to act in the person of Christ. They are called to be detached from material things and to devote themselves to the service of others through the complete gift of self in celibacy. Scandalous behaviour must at all times be investigated, confronted and corrected. With your friendship and fraternal support, as well as that of their brother priests, it will be easier for your clergy to be wholly devoted, in chastity and simplicity, to their ministry of service.

Of course, the attitudes and dispositions of a true shepherd must be nurtured in the hearts of future priests long before their ordination. This is the purpose of the human, spiritual, intellectual and pastoral formation provided in the seminary. The guidelines contained in my Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation *Pastores Dabo Vobis* will prove invaluable for evaluating candidates and improving their training. At the same time, steps should be taken to ensure that proper priestly formation continues after ordination, especially during the early years of ministry.

In the faith life of your communities Religious and Missionary Institutes continue to play a decisive role. While respecting the legitimate internal autonomy established for religious communities, the Bishop is to help them fulfil — within the local Church — their obligation to bear witness to the reality of God's love for his people. As Pastors of Christ's flock, you should urge careful discernment of the suitability of candidates to the religious life and help superiors to provide a solid spiritual and intellectual formation, both before and after profession.

5. In the fulfilment of your many duties, you and your priests must always be attentive to the human and spiritual needs of your people. Time and resources should never be spent on diocesan or parochial structures or on development projects at the expense of people; nor should such structures or projects impede personal contact with those whom God has called us to serve. Equity and transparency must be the indispensable traits characterizing all financial matters, with every effort being made to see that contributions are truly used for the purposes intended. The Church's pastoral mission and the duty of her ministers "not to be served but to serve" (*Mt 20:28*) must always be the overriding concern.

The concepts of service and solidarity can also do much to foster greater ecumenical and interreligious cooperation. A specific initiative that could help to spur progress in this area is the establishment of an agency for coordinating the various programmes aimed at lending assistance and humanitarian aid throughout the various regions of the country. Such coordination would undoubtedly serve to increase the effectiveness of these programmes and could even prove helpful in making contacts for the issue of the government permits necessary for travel to certain areas. The Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Sudan could actively sponsor and promote such a coordinating agency. On the model of the understanding already present in Southern Sudan with members of the Anglican Communion, the agency would be open to representatives of other Christian denominations and other religions, including Islam, thus fostering a climate of mutual trust through joint cooperation in the areas of educational and humanitarian assistance.

6. Dear Brother Bishops, my words to you today are meant to offer encouragement in the Lord. I am aware of

your daily toils and of the great pain and suffering that your people still endure: I assure you and them once more of my prayers and solidarity. With all of you I beseech the God of peace to grant success to the process of dialogue and negotiation now underway, so that truth, justice and reconciliation may again reign in the Sudan. I commend you and your Dioceses to the loving care of Mary, Queen of Apostles, and to the heavenly intercession of Saints Josephine Bakhita and Daniel Comboni. During this season of Advent, as we prepare to celebrate our Saviour's birth, may you and the priests, Religious and lay faithful of your local Churches be renewed in the hope that springs from the "glad tidings of great joy" proclaimed in Bethlehem. To all of you I cordially impart my Apostolic Blessing.

[01986-02.02] [Original text: English]

RINUNCE E NOMINE • RINUNCIA DEL VESCOVO DI GRANADA (NICARAGUA) E NOMINA DEL SUCCESSORE

Il Santo Padre ha accettato la rinuncia al governo pastorale della diocesi di Granada (Nicaragua), presentata da S.E. Mons. Leovigildo López Fitoria, C.M., in conformità al can. 401 § 1 del Codice di Diritto Canonico.

Giovanni Paolo II ha nominato Vescovo di Granada (Nicaragua) S.E. Mons. Bernardo Hombach Lutkermeier, finora Vescovo di Juigalpa.

S.E. Mons. Bernardo Hombach Lutkermeier

S.E. Mons. Bernardo Hombach Lutkermeier è nato a Krefeld, diocesi di Aachen in Germania, il 12 settembre 1933. Ha studiato filosofia a Treviri e teologia all'Università di Lovanio, in Belgio.

E' stato ordinato sacerdote a Lovanio il 28 giugno 1961.

Come sacerdote *fidei donum* ha lavorato in Argentina, Perù, Nigeria, Venezuela e Nicaragua. E' stato Vicario Generale della diocesi di Paderborn in Germania e di Juigalpa in Nicaragua. Presta il suo servizio pastorale in Nicaragua da 18 anni.

Il 18 febbraio 1995 è stato nominato Vescovo di Juigalpa. Ha ricevuto l'ordinazione episcopale il 22 aprile 1995.

[01987-01.01]

AVVISO DI CONFERENZA STAMPA

Si informano i giornalisti accreditati che **domani, martedì 16 dicembre 2003**, alle **ore 11.30**, nell'*Aula Giovanni Paolo II* della Sala Stampa della Santa Sede, avrà luogo la Conferenza Stampa di **presentazione del Messaggio di Sua Santità Giovanni Paolo II per la celebrazione della XXXVII Giornata Mondiale della Pace sul tema: "Un impegno sempre attuale: educare alla pace" (1° gennaio 2004)**.

Interverranno:

Em.mo Card. Renato Raffaele Martino, Presidente del Pontificio Consiglio della Giustizia e della Pace;

S.E. Mons. Giampaolo Crepaldi, Segretario del Pontificio Consiglio della Giustizia e della Pace;

Mons. Frank J. Dewane, Sotto-Segretario del medesimo Pontificio Consiglio;

Dr. Giorgio Filibeck, Ufficiale del medesimo Pontificio Consiglio.

(Il Messaggio è da considerarsi sotto embargo fino alle ore 12 di domani, martedì 16 dicembre 2003. Il testo - in lingua italiana, francese, inglese, tedesca, spagnola, portoghese - sarà a disposizione dei giornalisti accreditati a partire dalle ore 9 di martedì 16 dicembre.)

[01963-01.01]

[B0638-XX.01]
