



AMERICA/MEXICO-Celebration in Mexico for the blessed John Paul II and approval of the law for migrants

Mexico City (Agenzia Fides) - The weekend that has just ended was for the Mexicans a moment of real joy for the beatification of John Paul II, who in life had declared himself "Polish and Mexican". The 5 visits made by the Pope in Mexico confirm that he had great affection for the Mexican people. The sentence of the Pope remained engraved in the hearts of all Mexicans - "I am leaving, but my heart remains here" - is just one of many demonstrations of affection of Pope John Paul II to Our Lady of Guadalupe and to the faithful of Mexico. But there is another reason why the Mexicans are happy: the Chamber of Deputies of Mexico approved unanimously a few days ago, a new law that recognizes and protects the human rights of migrants, both for the countrymen and for foreigners, which had already been approved by the Senate. The initiative, approved by 432 votes in the final phase of the legislature, guarantees full respect for human rights of migrants, whatever their origin, nationality, gender, ethnicity, age and immigration status. "This new law will give legal certainty for migrants and thus are protected from violence or crimes such as extortion and kidnapping", said Norma Leticia Salazar MP, of the party of government, the National Action Party (PAN).

On behalf of Cristabella Zamora, opposition (member of the Institutional Revolutionary Party, PRI), said that thanks to this legislation, the migrants can have access to basic services like health care and education. It also supports those involved in the protection of migrants through service centers, in a country where illegal immigrants are routinely the victims of kidnapping and human rights abuses by corrupt officials and organized crime.

This new law, which since December 9, 2010 was discussed in the Mexican Congress, was approved by the Mexican Senate on February 22 (see Fides 25/2/2011) and will now be forwarded to the Executive Committee for promulgation. The law provides that any illegal immigrant who has been a victim or witness of a crime, can have legal status in the country until the end of the trial and he will be allowed to work during that period. It also provides access to health services for immigrants, legal, financial, and the opportunity to regularize their immigration status. Each year, more than 300,000 immigrants try to reach the United States through Mexico, the vast majority of them are Central Americans. (EC) (Agenzia Fides 03/05/2011)