



## **AMERICA/MEXICO-The VII World Congress on the Pastoral Care of Tourism in Mexico, where 22 million tourists arrived in 2010**

Cancun (Agenzia Fides) - The Vatican will have the full support of the Mexican authorities for the realization of the VII World Congress on the Pastoral Care of Tourism to be held from 23 to 27 April 2012, assured the Ambassador of Mexico to the Holy See, Hector Frederick Ling Altamirano. In a statement to Notimex agency, the Ambassador announced that the Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Travelers has chosen the city of Cancun, in southeastern Mexico, for this meeting, and defined the announcement made by Congress "excellent news" and will be attended by religious and lay people involved in the pastoral care of tourism throughout the Catholic world.

"It is no doubt an important event, which recognizes the importance of Mexico in this field, particularly in the so-called religious tourism", the Ambassador continued, insisting on the fact that the organizers (the Holy See, The Mexican Episcopal Conference and the Prelature of Quintana Roo-Chetumal) can rely not only on the support but "on the large sympathy" of the government. "The realization of this event in Cancun confirms the excellent state of bilateral relations between Mexico and the Holy See, also confirming the convergence of views on the issue of tourism and its important human dimension", he added.

The Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe in Mexico City is the first religious tourism destination in the world for the Catholic faithful, exceeding the Vatican, Fatima (Portugal) and Lourdes (France). According to the World Tourism Organization (WTO), Mexico is the tenth country in the world to receive tourists and the first in Latin America. "Only in 2010 22 million tourists, four and a half million more than in 2009 were welcomed in various places. This is in foreign currency around \$ 12 billion, more than five percent compared to the previous year", concluded the Ambassador. (EC) (Agenzia Fides 12/07/2011)