



AMERICA/PERU - "To carry out mission in an area where there are scars of violence": the testimony of the Archbishop of Ayacucho

Vatican City (Agenzia Fides) – During a break in the work of the Synod on the New Evangelization, Fides Agency met His Exc. Mgr. Salvador Piñeiro Garcia-Calderon, Metropolitan Archbishop of Ayacucho and President of the Peruvian Episcopal Conference, who is attending the Synod, and collected his testimony in view of World Mission Day on Sunday, October 21, this is what he said:

"On World Mission Day we are called to share the Faith - the Archbishop said to Fides - and we are concerned that in Peru there are places where Jesus has not been announced yet or we have strayed from the Gospel. In Peru, there are 8 Apostolic Vicariates. The area of the Peruvian jungle, for example, is very difficult to evangelize, because it has few resources and the geography of the area is rather complex. However, we can count on the religious who have been helping us for more than 100 years in this missionary task.

In many of these areas, especially in parishes, one thinks of missions beyond borders. Because our mission is to give the Good News, that makes us grow as brothers and sisters, in which we assess the person, makes us work towards a society of peace and to build a civilization of love. When there is no Gospel, on the contrary, everything is insecurity, doubt, violence, death.

When we talk about Jesus life, love, justice, peace become present. It is a nice thing that on World Mission Sunday this year, the Holy Father with the Bishops who are participating in the Synod, will canonize 7 Blessed who worked with the sick and the children, bringing hope and peace in difficult situations.

Even I, as Bishop of Ayacucho, work as a missionary. In my diocese, in my territory, I have to go and evangelize, because there are areas that are difficult to reach, for geographical difficulties and distances. The people of these places have heard little of Jesus and the Gospel, and yet many need this message, because in their hearts wounds of violence are still alive. (The area of Ayacucho in past years was the scene of fierce fighting between the army and guerrillas of Sendero Luminoso, ed)

For this reason I ask the missionary world to pray also for Ayacucho, for my Church, a very old Church, which has been proclaiming the Gospel in the area for four centuries. I ask everyone to have a missionary conscience to speak of Jesus, who is the source of forgiveness, reconciliation and peace. It is nice to see this Church, present in the Synod of Bishops, whose representatives come from all over the world, especially from places where Jesus has not yet been announced, share their experiences and hopes." (CE) (Agenzia Fides 17/10/2012)