

**Words from His Holiness, Pope Benedict XVI, Regarding Immigration
During His Apostolic Journey to the United States
*April 15-20 2008***

**Interview with His Holiness, Pope Benedict XVI, during his flight to America,
*Tuesday, 15 April 2008***

(Question from Andrés Leonardo Beltramo Álvarez):

“Your Holiness...There is an enormous growth in Hispanic presence also in the Church in the United States in general: The Catholic community is becoming ever more bilingual and ever more bicultural. At the same time, there exists in the society an increasing anti-immigration movement. The situation of the immigrants is characterized by unstable situations and discrimination. Do you intend to speak of this problem and to invite America to welcome immigrants, many of whom are Catholic?”

(Response from Pope Benedict XVI):

“...I certainly will touch on this point. I have received various "ad limina" visits from the Central American bishops and also from South America, and I have seen the amplitude of this problem, above all the grave problem of the separation of families. And this is truly dangerous for the social, moral and human fabric of these countries. Nevertheless, one must differentiate between measures that must be adopted right away and long-term solutions.

The fundamental solution is that there would no longer exist the need to emigrate because there would be in one's own country sufficient work, a sufficient social fabric, such that no one has to emigrate. Therefore we should all work for this objective, for a social development that permits offering citizens work and a future in their land of origin. And also about this point, I would like to speak with the President, because above all the United States should help with the aim that these countries can develop in this way. This is in the interest of everyone, not just of these countries, but of the world, and also of the United States.

Besides this, short-term measures: It is very important to help the families above all. In the light of the conversations that I have had with the bishops, the principal problem is that there be protection for the families, that they not be destroyed. What can be done should be done. In the same way, naturally, all that is possible must be done to work against the instability of the situations and against all the violations, and to help so that they can have a truly dignified life where they find themselves in this moment.

I would like to also say that there are many problems, many sufferings, but there is also a lot of hospitality! I know that above all the American episcopal conference collaborates a lot with the Latin American episcopal conferences in the face of needed

help. With all the sorrowful things, let's not forget also so much true humanity, so many positive actions that also exist.”

Final Holy See – US Joint Statement, Oval Office, Wednesday, 16 April 2008

“The Holy Father and the President also considered the situation in Latin America with reference, among other matters, to immigrants, and the need for a coordinated policy regarding immigration, especially their humane treatment and the well being of their families.”

Celebration of Vespers and Meeting with the Bishops of the United States of America, National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception, Wednesday, 16 April 2008

“Many of the people to whom John Carroll and his fellow Bishops were ministering two centuries ago had traveled from distant lands. The diversity of their origins is reflected in the rich variety of ecclesial life in present-day America. Brother Bishops, I want to encourage you and your communities to continue to welcome the immigrants who join your ranks today, to share their joys and hopes, to support them in their sorrow and trials, and to help them flourish in their new home. This, indeed, is what your fellow countrymen have done for generations. From the beginning, they have opened their doors to the tired, the poor, the ‘huddled masses yearning to breathe free.’ These are the people whom America has made her own.”

Holy Mass, Homily of His Holiness Benedict XVI, Washington Nationals Stadium, Thursday, 17 April 2008

(In Spanish): “The Church in the United States, welcoming in its bosom so many of its immigrant children, has been growing also thanks to the vitality of the testimony of faith from Spanish-speaking faithful. For this, the Lord calls you to continue contributing to the future of the Church in this country and the spreading of the Gospel. Only if you are united to Christ and among yourselves, will your evangelizing testimony be credible and bloom with copious fruits of peace and reconciliation in the midst of a world many times marked by division and conflicts. The Church hopes much from you. In your generous commitment, do not let it down. ‘What you have received freely, give freely’ (Matthew 10:8). Amen!”

Celebration of the Holy Eucharist, Homily of His Holiness Benedict XVI, Yankee Stadium, Sunday, 20 April 2008

“Today we recall the bicentennial of a watershed in the history of the Church in the United States: its first great chapter of growth. In these two hundred years, the face of the Catholic community in your country has changed greatly. We think of the successive waves of immigrants whose traditions have so enriched the Church in America... In our day, too, the Catholic community in this nation has been outstanding in its prophetic witness in the defense of life, in the education of the young, in care for the poor, the sick, and the stranger in your midst.”

(In Spanish): “Here, in this country of freedom, I want to proclaim with strength that the Word of Christ does not eliminate our aspirations to a full and free life, but rather in it we discover our true dignity as sons of God and it encourages us to fight against all that enslaves us, beginning with our own egotism and whims. At the same time, it encourages us to manifest our faith through our life of charity and make our ecclesial lives be each day more welcoming and fraternal. Above all to the youth I entrust you to take on the great challenge that comes with believing in Christ, and to manifest your faith through closeness to the poor, and through generous responses to the calls that He continues to make to leave everything and begin a life of total consecration to God and the Church, in the priestly or religious life. Dear brothers and sisters, I invite you to look to the future with hope, allowing Jesus to enter into your lives. Only He is the path that leads to the happiness that never ends, the truth that satisfies the noblest human aspirations, and the life overflowing with joy for the good of the Church and the world. May God bless you.”