



POST-SYNODAL APOSTOLIC EXHORTATION

QUERIDA AMAZONIA

Of the Holy Father Francis

To the People of God and to all persons of good will



“The beloved Amazon region stands before the world in all its splendour, its drama and its mystery.”

THIS APOSTOLIC EXHORTATION IS ADDRESSED NOT ONLY TO THE COUNTRIES OF AMAZONIA BUT TO ALL THE FAITHFUL THROUGHOUT THE WORLD:

To awaken their affection and concern for this land that is also “ours”.

To invite them to value it and acknowledge it as a sacred mystery.

Because the Church’s concern for the problems of this area can assist other areas of our world in confronting their own challenges.

THE FOUR GREAT DREAMS THAT AMAZONIA INSPIRES IN POPE FRANCIS ARE:



Fighting for the rights of the poor, the indigenous people, the least of our brother and sisters.



Preserving its distinctive cultural riches.



Preserving its natural beauty and life.



Christian communities incarnate in the Amazon region, and giving the Church new faces with Amazonian features.



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Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation

A SOCIAL DREAM



“Our dream is that of an Amazon region that can integrate and promote all its inhabitants, enabling them to enjoy ‘good living’.”

This calls for a prophetic plea and an arduous effort on behalf of the poor.

We need a truly ecological approach that always becomes a social approach.

We must never ignore the Amazonian peoples.

THE COLONIZING INTERESTS IN AMAZONIA HAVE PRODUCED LAMENTABLE RESULTS:



THE HISTORY OF AMAZONIA REVEALS UNSCRUPULOUS PLUNDERING OF THE REGION'S NATURAL RICHES. ACTION MUST BE TAKEN:

- They have expelled or marginalized the indigenous peoples, the river people and those of African descent.
- They have encouraged migratory movements to the outskirts of the cities.
- They have submitted large parts of the population to slavery and misery.
- Many cities are witnessing an increase of xenophobia, sexual exploitation and human trafficking.

- To build networks of solidarity and development.
- To remember that, amid all the excesses, missionaries arrived with the Gospel, leaving their homes and leading an austere and demanding life alongside those who were most defenceless.
- To ask pardon for all the crimes in the history of Amazonia.
- To thank the indigenous peoples for being the living memory of the mission God gave us: caring for our Common Home.

THE SOCIAL STRUGGLE IMPLIES A CAPACITY FOR SOLIDARITY AND A DESIRE FOR HUMAN COMMUNION:



- Amazonia must also be a place for social dialogue.
- In dialoguing with the least and the last, we must ask: How do they themselves envision their “good living”?
- Others must be acknowledged and esteemed precisely as others, having their own feelings, choices and ways of living and working.





We must cultivate
without uprooting.

We must foster growth
without weakening
identity.

We must be supportive
without being invasive.

“ Promoting the Amazon region does not imply colonizing it culturally but instead helping it to bring out the best of itself. ”

IN AMAZONIA THERE ARE THOUSANDS OF COMMUNITIES VERY DIFFERENT FROM ONE ANOTHER:

- Many feel that they are the last bearers of a treasure doomed to disappear.
- They have survived in Amazonia thanks to their cultural identity and unique richness.
- They have passed down their cultural wisdom orally, with myths, legends and tales.
- God manifests himself in them and reflects something of his inexhaustible beauty.

IT IS POSSIBLE TO DEVELOP INTERCULTURAL RELATIONS AMONG THESE PEOPLE WHEREIN:

- Diversity does not mean threat.
- Diversity does not justify hierarchies of power of some over others.
- Diversity is a sign of dialogue between different cultural visions, of celebration, of interrelationship and of revival of hope.

*“There is a need to respect the rights of peoples and cultures and to appreciate that the development of a social group ... demands the constant and active involvement of local people from within their **own culture.**”*





“The Lord, who is the first to care for us, teaches us to care for our brothers and sisters and the environment which he daily gives us. This is the first ecology that we need.”

The care of people and the care of ecosystems are inseparable.

The wisdom of the original peoples inspires care and respect for creation.

To abuse nature is to abuse our ancestors, our brothers and sisters, creation and the Creator.

AS THINGS STAND NOW, THIS WAY OF TREATING THE AMAZON TERRITORY SPELLS THE END FOR SO MUCH LIFE, FOR SO MUCH BEAUTY:



- The equilibrium of our planet depends on the health of the Amazon region.
- It is necessary to combine ancestral wisdom with contemporary technical knowledge.
- The environment as “resource” risks threatening the environment as “home”.
- We must insist on a legal framework which will ensure the protection of ecosystems.



WHEN WE LEARN FROM THE INDIGENOUS PEOPLES, WE CAN:

- *Contemplate* Amazonia and not simply analyze it, and thus appreciate this precious mystery that transcends us.
- *Love it*, not simply use it, with the result that love can awaken a deep and sincere interest.
- *Feel intimately a part of it* and not only defend it.

We must awaken our God-given aesthetic and contemplative sense that so often we let languish. This **interior conversion** will enable us to weep for the Amazon region and to join in its cry to the Lord.





“The Church is called to journey alongside the people of the Amazon region. But for this incarnation of the Church and the Gospel to be possible, the great missionary proclamation must continue to resound.”

We cannot set aside the call to faith that we have received from the Gospel.

Nor can we be content with a social message.

The Amazonian peoples have the right to hear the Gospel announced to them.

THE CHURCH NEEDS TO GROW IN AMAZONIA:



- Through a necessary process of inculturation.
- Without rejecting any of the goodness that already exists in Amazonian cultures.
- Without scorning the richness of Christian wisdom handed down through the centuries.
- With a watchful and critical attitude, while at the same time showing confident attention.

PATHS OF INCULTURATION IN AMAZONIA:

- The Church needs to listen to the ancestral wisdom of the original peoples.
- Given the situation of poverty and neglect, inculturation will necessarily have a markedly social cast.
- A process of inculturation demands a respectful and understanding love for those peoples.
- A holiness with Amazonian features should challenge the universal Church.
- The sacraments should always be accessible, especially for the poor.

Inculturation of the forms of ministry means:



More frequent celebration of the Eucharist, even in the remotest and most isolated communities.



Greater presence of ordained ministers who can celebrate the Eucharist.

IN THE SPECIFIC CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AMAZON REGION, A WAY MUST BE FOUND TO ENSURE THIS PRIESTLY MINISTRY AND TO PROMOTE COMMUNITIES FILLED WITH LIFE.



Ensuring that the Amazonian peoples do not lack the food of new life and the sacrament of forgiveness.



Praying for priestly vocations in Latin America and for more missionaries in Amazonia.



Revising the program of ongoing formation of priests.



Providing support for permanent deacons, religious women and men, and lay persons.



Promoting mature lay leaders endowed with authority.



Giving thought to itinerant missionary teams.

THE STRENGTH AND GIFT OF WOMEN IN AMAZONIA:



- Many communities have long preserved and handed on the faith thanks to the presence of strong and generous women.
- They make their contribution in a way that is properly theirs, by making present the tender strength of Mary.
- We must promote the emergence of forms of service and charisms that are proper to women.
- Women should have a real and effective impact on the organization, the decisions and the direction of the communities.

In an Amazonia characterized by many religions, we believers need to find occasions to speak to one another and to act together for the common good and the promotion of the poor.

ALL OF US, AS CHRISTIANS, ARE UNITED BY:

- ✓ Faith in God, the Father who gives us life and loves us so greatly.
- ✓ Faith in Jesus Christ, the one Saviour.
- ✓ Our desire for his word that guides our steps.
- ✓ The fire of the Spirit, who sends us forth on mission.
- ✓ The new commandment Jesus left us, and the pursuit of the civilization of love.
- ✓ The struggle for peace and justice.
- ✓ The conviction that we are called to the heavenly banquet, where God will wipe away every tear and gather up all that we did for those who suffer.

“All this unites us. How can we not struggle together? How can we not pray and work together, side by side, to defend the poor of the Amazon region, to show the sacred countenance of the Lord, and to care for his work of creation?”

POPE FRANCIS

