

Latin america and the catholic church



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Running head: Latin America and the Catholic Church Latin America and the Catholic Church Insert Insert Insert 10 June 2011 What did some reform-minded Catholics in Nicaragua hope that the pope might do during his visit to that country? According to Hoyt (1983), when people gathered at Nicaragua to listen to the pope's speech and thereafter for the mass that would be conducted by the pope, they had hoped that the pope would utter some words of consolation for the bereaved families who had lost their loved one during the recent killings of counter-revolution. A total of 17 members of the Sandinista youth organization had been killed during the ambush, and the Christians hoped that the pope would console them due to their loss. However, the pope avoided making any remarks that related to the killings, and rather, concentrated on the church unity, something that was unexpected to the crowd. The crowd was disappointed, hence making it hard for the mass to proceed as planned; they made a lot of noise that demanded for a consolation from the pope. However, the pope basically never commented on any political stand as the reformists hoped. His message was basically on the unity in the church. What position did the pope eventually make clear to the Nicaraguan priests? The pope's words towards the Nicaraguan priest were very clear; since he recognized the fact that they had been treated recklessly and inhumanely, but he specified that it was not wise for them to avenge against their rivals. As such, an action would be disrespectful to the memories of martyrs such as Bishop Romero, and it would lead to political ideologies and their faith would be compromised. The pope mostly insisted on the church unity to the priests as a way to promote peace in the area, and avoid divisions (Hoyt, 1993). What did they, correctly as it proved, fear might happen after the pope's visit? After that dramatic

visit of the pope to Nicaraguan, according to Hoyt (1983), the results witnessed there after included increased battles in the Matagalpa area. According to Demott (1983), “ since the pope’ visit, the Nicaraguan hierarchy has had less tolerance for the government and Catholics who support the revolution.” This basically tarnished the pope’s visit, as it symbolized the visit unfruitful, with the situation only worsening to wars other than peace and unity of the church upon which the pope had stressed on. Why were some Nicaraguan Catholics disappointed with the pope’s position on political action? Catholics attended the mass with an expectation that the pope would console them for their loss. However, rather than concentrating on tension among people or consoling them, the pope stressed that church unity was the only way forward to curb corruption and division in the church. According to Hoyt (1983), the pope completely ignored the slogans that were politically maneuvered, some of which stated “ peoples power”, “ we want peace”, among others. They were not pleased by the pope’s remarks, and they hoped that the pope would side with either the government or the Catholics. On the contrary, he played his cards well and neither sided with the two groups. The Catholics felt ignored and as a result, wars continued even after the pope’s visit. References Hoyt, K. (1983). The 1983 Visit of Pope John Paul II to Nicaragua. Retrieved from <http://www.hartford-hwp.com/archives/47/030.html>. Demott, S. (1983). The Pope in Central America: What Did His Trip Accomplish? Retrieved from <http://www.americancatholic.org/Features/JohnPaulIII/3-CentralAmerica-1983.asp>.