

Letter from the pope to de las casas

[History](#)



Letter of His Holiness The Pope De Las Casas The Aftermath of Columbus

Expedition on the Taino Dear Brother,

Greetings and may the peace and joy of the Lord, whom we serve, be with you. I also hope you are in the best state of health and well-motivated as we pursue the ultimate goal of global evangelism. I commend you as well for your great achievements, your ordination as a deacon and then as a priest. It is also worth mentioning your endeavors half a world away, during your expeditions alongside Christopher Columbus, and then later on your own. It is such a big thanks to the Lord for to such great lengths. I am writing to air my reaction about the report on your observations while there, as well as giving the stand of the Catholic Church on the issue.

It is utterly shocking and saddening to read of the atrocities committed by a man upon a fellow man. The indigenous people of the Hispaniola Island, The Taino Indians, are human just like us. They are friendly and peace loving, with utter hospitality to visitors. At no time did they ever react in a violent manner towards the Spanish visitors who went there. Columbus himself acknowledged the fact that even though they were still primitive and leading a very basic way of life, they were very hospitable. Their culture and simplicity gave them an inner joy, which glowed to the outside . This, is the life we have always wanted, and which the bible teaches us to live. It is also from our Christian teaching that we learn about treating each other like a brother and loving our neighbors as we love ourselves. Therefore, it is a shame and absolutely reproachable, when I read of your report. It is only the physical capacity and the military authority that I do not have, but culprits of such acts needed to be dealt with accordingly.

The Catholic Church is going to maintain its initial push for global

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evangelization. The most positive bit of it is the discovery of the New World by Columbus and his team, which serves as fertile ground for evangelism. The initial task of Columbus was to spread Catholicism at a rapid rate in order to combat the spread of Islam to these regions. This is what the church was in support of. However, the church holds no support for slavery, slave trade or anything connected in whatever way, to such practices. We also abhor forced labor as learnt from your report, which is being meted upon the locals in the gold and silver mines. Your efforts in fighting for the rights and freedom of the Indians on the region shall be fully supported by the church. This is because your approach of colonization by farmers rather than soldiers, is the most effective and non-violent way of change. You also have our agenda of missionary work in your activities, as witnessed by your trips to various parts of the Indies such as Guatemala and the Dominican states. The Catholic Church shall therefore uphold its support for your activities in all ways possible. Just as the bible, through the teachings of our Lord Jesus Christ teaches us to be our brother's keeper. I therefore on the behalf of the Catholic Church commend you for the continuing efforts you have put into fighting for the freedom of these indigenous people.

I therefore continue urging you my brother in Christ, that just as we learnt about avoiding greed, so should we teach our people against the vice. Just as we know about the Ten Commandments, so should we prevent people from killing each other? Decimation of the Indians is not only inhuman, but also a mortal sin by all standards. Thank you and let's continue pursuing the call that we heeded upon joining this ministry for our Lord, through His Son and the Holy Spirit.

May peace be with you,

From the Vatican, 1540.