

Over the last few years since
my 'Trouble' in Argentina I have
become increasingly involved in
the struggle for human rights against
torture, ~~disappearances~~ & political
assassinations in Latin America. That
means I ~~have~~ travel fairly extensively
in the region coming into contact
with very different life styles and
people. As a missionary ~~then~~
I look at more closely the
religious aspects of things within
this general context. It's been
my intention to keep up a better
correspondence with ~~some~~ but the
many friends & neighbors at
home ~~that~~ who are so interested
in the work but I have never
been able to go about it properly.
Speaking recently to Edward Gartner
I offered a series of short articles

for the Archdiocese ~~with~~
~~focus~~ on the Latin American
Scene & my own involvement
in the work of the Church for
Human Rights. They will ~~&~~ not
this first

be anything very elaborate but
will try to convey some of
the events, the happenings that I
see going on.

I have had to hurry back
this time because Holy Week &
Easter is just around the corner &
as a priest no matter what happens
one has to be around for EASTER
with one's community.

I work with three communities
in the outskirts of Caracas in
Venezuela and for everybody there
Holy Week is certainly the most
religious week of the year.

Holy Week is a community celebration
it is traditionally the time when
the religious leaves the churches
to go on the streets by means
of the different processions.

The first one is Palm Sunday.
We have of course the ^{original} big palm
branches and we decided
to leave the Blessing until
the end of the ~~sermon~~ ^{Mass} of
all of which takes place in
the open air. Once the palms
are blessed there is sheer havoc
as everybody scrambles to get
some leaves. They make a type
of St. Brigid's Cross or put
it on the back of the chair.
Blessing them at the end means
everybody can quietly take part
up to that time.

Tuesday sees the beginnings of the big pressure. Holy Tuesday we remember Jesus in chains or imprisoned. Some statue of Christ is taken out at night and a penitent part in the procession is taken by all who are devotees of Christ in Chains. They may come tied up with ropes & chains. That is because of some pledge they took at a crime part in their lives. It is a traditional day for ex-prisoners or families with relatives in Prison to express that confidence that Christ in Chains will bring solace to their loved ones.

We then have on Wednesday Jesus the Dayarene

Some weeks ago I met a
Jewish Rabbi Marshall Meyer.
I had known him some 10 years
ago as he worked in Argentina
to help Chileans escape from
the Pinochet Dictatorship which
had ~~recently~~ violently taken power
~~there~~ in Chile.

He also had suffered persecution
from the military junta in
Buenos Aires but had ^{not} gone
back a year or two previously.
The new Democratic Government
of Raúl Alfonsín had requested
him to join a Commission which
has been investigating the whole
list.

There is something about
the city of Washington in the
United States that is both
frightening and charming.

The City owes power from its
very architecture and lay out
with the Capitol Building,
the Long Hall ^{that runs along} the White House,
now with these dreadful cement
barriers that Reagan has
installed. Then one has the
Washington Monument so like
Wellington in Dublin the
Jefferson Memorial across in the
so-called Basin near the
Potomac. Crossing over the
Bridge one faces the Pentagon
a truly enormous building
imposing, indifferent &
dominating. The State Dept

Building a little up the
 River on the White House
 side is another fighting
 type of structure with many
 other structural buildings put
 far away such as the
 World Bank. Looking at
 some of these buildings one
 can not but help thinking
 of similar buildings in
 Moscow, the Kremlin.

But then there is the
 other Washington. The simply
 constructed four Acres with
 timber balconies. The Washington
 of Madison & Park, the District
 Columbia University, of Mount
 Pleasant where people are
 friendly personal and very
 human. The City of Washington

belongs to these people
mostly black except for a
sizeable colony of Latinos who
like to gather in the Parque de
las Palomas, Pigeon Park in English

It is the Washington of 14 Street
with its drug pushed & prostitutes
together with the drop-in
centers for down & outs. Here
there are two remarkable
communities which keep moving
the Sugarman Community - a Protestant
movement which has community
houses, a general facilities
centre & a ~~weekly~~ religious
series of activities. Its founder &
leader Jim Wallis is one of the
new spiritual leaders of the
Americas in the United States.
Then there is the Catholic Worker

Community with its soup kitchen
 & its work for the poor. Then there
 is the Catholic Church of St. Paul's
 & Augustine which just off
 14th Street which cultivates some
 of the best ~~St.~~ Gospel singing
 & Spirituals ~~within~~ in the
 Country.

There is indeed much more
 to Washington than Mr. Reagan
 the White House the Pentagon
~~and~~ State Department &
 Congress. Just like other Great
 World centres in the past
~~they~~ it will also fold up.

In these days in April we
 can ~~the~~ see this ~~the~~ happening in
 a Profetic type of way.

~~The~~ The Japanese planted
many Cherry trees in the city
many years ago and in the
space of two weeks these
trees together with Magnolias
& other trees all begin to
bloom splendidly. It is as if
the city has been invaded
by flowers. In fact seeing
these trees blooming all over the
city one feels almost as if
nature itself was trying to
communicate with these in Power
that they should be making
Peace & not war, seeing
brotherhood & not strife.
Certainly it is impossible to ignore
the cherry blossoms in this
time of the year in Washington

but if their message is
heard I doubt it.
However it is good to
know they are there.

Nena o su mamá B: As.

[5674874]

Que va en julio hasta Septiembre
Esta muy bien - saludos -