



# TOPIC 3

## THE KINGDOM OF GOD AS A HORIZON FOR THE MISSION

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### THE KINGDOM OF GOD AS A HORIZON FOR THE MISSION

#### I. INTRODUCTION

In this topic we wish to propose some contents that allow us to deepen our understanding of the relationship between the Kingdom of God and Christian mission.

In this experience of CAM6, we wish **to promote the Church's mission ad gentes with new ardor, walking together as we listen to the Spirit, to be witnesses of faith in Jesus Christ in the reality of our peoples to the ends of the earth.**

It is necessary to begin our proposal by recognizing that the Kingdom of God is not simply the horizon of the mission as a peripheral issue that can be visualized or not according to the circumstances or the simple desire of the ecclesial community. The Kingdom of God is the very heart of the mission, it is the reason for the mission. Let us remember that the mission is of God, and this mission takes us, as Church, and gives meaning to our existence.

St. Luke presents Jesus himself at the beginning of his public mission, located in the synagogue, a place of communal "listening" to God, assuming the prophecy of Isaiah as the framework and definition of his mission, let us read the text, Lk 4:14-21:

*"Jesus returned to Galilee in the power of the Spirit, and his fame spread throughout the whole region. He taught in the synagogues, and everyone praised him. Jesus went to Nazareth, where he had been brought up; and on the Sabbath he went as usual into the synagogue and stood up to do the reading. The book of the prophet Isaiah was presented to him and, opening it, he found the passage where it was written: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has consecrated me by the anointing. He has sent me to bring good news to the poor, to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed and to proclaim a year of the Lord's favor". Jesus closed the Book, gave it back to the helper and sat down. Everyone in the synagogue had their eyes fixed on him. Then he began to say to them, "Today this scripture passage you have just heard has been fulfilled.""*

Jesus is the Kingdom of God, his person and his message, his word, his way of life, his capacity for relationship, and his fidelity to the plan of salvation that flows constantly from the heart of the Father, this is the Kingdom of God. We can simply identify, in the text of Isaiah, quoted by Luke, and put in the mouth of Jesus, some clear expressions that describe the Kingdom:

- The Spirit of God takes center stage and consecrates (anoints) Jesus for the mission.
- Jesus consciously assumes his condition as a sent one.
- The envoy has concrete interlocutors: the poor.
- The dynamics of the Kingdom is expressed in specific movements: liberation, healing.

These are the clear fruit of God's action in favor of humankind.

The final sentence, "today it is fulfilled..." allows us to understand that Jesus not only sympathizes with the prophecy, but that he assumes it as a way of life, thus concretizing the mission of the Son, sent by the Father, anointed by the Spirit.

Now, let us ask ourselves: what are the consequences of all this for us? The answer cannot wait: the mission that Jesus entrusts to us, the one that gives meaning and content to the life of the Church, is not only a continuity of the mission of Jesus, understood as a prolongation in time. Our fidelity to the mission of the Kingdom goes through a constant process of transformation that is not only translated into the proclamation of the faith to those who do not know the Gospel, but it is also a path of permanent conversion to the faith on our own part, the words of Jesus: "be converted because the Kingdom is among you" generate the necessary healthy tension in our believing experience, at the personal and community level.

## II. DEVELOPMENT

### **The Kingdom of God: its nature and values**

The message of Jesus of Nazareth about the Kingdom of God that is here in our midst is resounding. It points to the present. The true present is by definition constituted by all the pasts that made it possible and open to the future as a possibility.

If we could identify an ethical dimension of living the Kingdom, it is possible to observe the global experience of the pandemic, as a clear example: in many of us it has remained resonating as a challenge, a need to change

our lives. It is imperative to break the logic that sustains such a vertiginous way of living. This ethical dimension possibly challenges us to seek a lifestyle that embraces simplicity, that renounces appearances, the race for prestige and irresponsible and excessive consumption. But a proper understanding of the Kingdom goes beyond a mere ethical interpretation as a moralistic demand. Then, when we contemplate again the experience of Jesus through the Sacred Scriptures, we can understand that the possible moral demands of living the Kingdom are sustained in a much deeper learning experience where the missionary disciple, through the permanent encounter with Christ, progressively assumes his belonging to God, his belonging to the Church, and from this filial relationship, in which God is considered as Father and the Church as Mother, it is understood that the Kingdom of God offered to all humanity, served by the Church as sacrament of salvation, leads us to rediscover the vocation to unity, a unity that is not exhausted within the Church, but opens to the mysticism of belonging to the human family.

In the Christian faith the centrality of the person of Jesus Christ is decisive, let us remember once again that Jesus not only "speaks of the Kingdom", He "is" the Kingdom of God; consequently, believers must sustain a dynamic that allows us to return to Him always, and when we project ourselves to announce Him, we must try to do so by embracing the totality of His person and His message, for us and for our interlocutors we must seek the constant experience of the fascination with His person and His message.

It is common to meet people who share with us their own search for happiness,



even more, we ourselves seek to be happy. However, not infrequently these searches are focused on the satisfaction of needs or on the attempt to achieve minimal personal or family security, but do we find this kind of happiness in Jesus, in his mission? In a simple exercise of contemplation we quickly discover that Jesus does not come to us to give us some superficial message of consolation or to entertain us with some commitments to healthy causes in fashion at any given time, Jesus is not a pragmatic revolutionary, nor a mystic abstracted from reality, who sells a superficial happiness, nor does he even pretend to give a possible questioning message. Jesus lives, meets, listens, feels, speaks, serves, carries the cross, dies giving his life to save - redeem the world. The Kingdom of God is Salvation for the world.

The irruption of the Kingdom in history allows us to understand that everything can be redeemed, that the justice of God wants to reach everyone by saving them. A Christian is a person fascinated by the experience of being saved and seeks to approach every situation of pain and sin in order to offer God's salvation to all through word, witness, and the giving of one's life. For this to be possible, the discipleship dimension of our Christian condition allows us to enter always in communion with Jesus to learn his words, his gestures, his ways, and in turn, this same discipleship condition, complemented with the missionary dimension allows us to mature in the capacity of encounter with others, in such a way that reality also reaches us, enters into us, hurts us with its pain, rejoices us with its joy, engages us with its needs. It is an exercise of permanent decentering, where we give primacy to Jesus, master of humility, constancy, patience, and compassion, and we look from his gaze, with

the freedom of the children of God, this is the missionary movement that makes us servants of the Kingdom.

### **Spirituality of the missionary disciple of the Kingdom of God**

Our condition of being called, anointed, and sent. The vocational dimension of our own faith journey leads us to discover that, because we are called to believe in God and open ourselves to the gift of his fatherhood, we are anointed and sent to offer this gift to all. Nourishing our awareness of being "sent" will always lead us to an exercise of purification that uninstalls us and drives away any pretension of superiority, triumphalism or missionary exitism. We do not have a mission, God's mission has us.

Our interlocutors are those of Jesus, the poor. A key to missionary discernment will always be the life of the poor, not as victims of a system, but as a theological place where God makes himself present and demands of us fidelity in the service of justice, truth, dignity and the common good.

The movements proper to the mission of Jesus, in favor of the people, continue to be the channels of the mission entrusted to us, this avoids possible deviant interpretations of the mission, which can have the aroma of moral, pious, doctrinal abstractions. The mission at the service of the Kingdom asks us for a spirituality of belonging to the Holy Faithful People of God, which celebrates, listens to God in the Scriptures and in reality, and serving compassionately, without arrogance or hidden interests, offers the way of salvation and recognizes the Reign of God.

For Jesus, the Kingdom of God, what he hoped for and announced, is what happens when God reigns instead of any other

power. In historical terms, that is, in terms of its realization in time, it means that peace, justice and love reign among human beings and in nature. The kingdom of Jesus, a kingdom of justice and service, seeks to grow in the midst of people and the world. Jesus did not flee from the world, nor does he invite anyone to flee from it. "My kingdom is not of this world", this word of Jesus should not lead us to be unconcerned and evade, falling into a spiritualization of evangelization, for we are called to serve in the expansion of a Kingdom that is not identified with the powers of this world but that becomes visible, tangible in it. That is what Jesus dedicated himself to: witness and service. Mission is not an exercise of power; power creates domination, uniformity, produces depersonalization and submission. The power of witness and service does not dominate, nor does it impose itself, nor punish, nor condemn, nor excommunicate, but accompanies and enamors, creates freedom and unity in diversity and equality, authentic communion. Of course, presented in this way, there could be those who point out that it is necessary not to lose sight of the fact that the mission also has a content that must be presented, and that those who intend to follow Jesus and call themselves Christians must accept. And it is so, the mission is not exhausted in a humanitarian action that seeks to solve the problems of social coexistence and the decisions of order.

The Kingdom of God is also the Kingdom of Truth. In Jesus, the truth of God and the truth of man are presented to us; the mission at the service of the Kingdom does not renounce this truth, much less negotiate it; the missionary witness includes the witness of the Truth, Christ (Jn 14:6). Authentic freedom is given to us in this truth (Jn 8:31-38). However, it will always be necessary

to distance ourselves from the temptation of legalism, understood as the eagerness to propose the way of faith as the mere fulfillment of laws and norms. Jesus does not disavow the moral norms of faith, the novelty in Jesus arises in the primacy of the commandment of love, which completes the law, overcoming the understanding of this, as a mere sequence of prohibitions and indications to become the demanding and liberating proposal to live in fidelity to God and in communion with the brethren. In Jesus, this is not just a discourse, it is his way of life, and our missionary discipleship involves assuming the same form.

### **Manifestation of the Kingdom: social transformation**

A characteristic feature of the Kingdom of God that Jesus announces is its actual and permanent realization: he does not announce a utopia but a reality that he makes present (Mt 11:3-5) (Lk 17:21). "God has entered into human history...which has changed color and perspective...the world has not come to an end, but the old world has been transformed into a new one". Jesus reveals Himself as "God Himself under human condition: the awaited one of the nations, the savior of the world." He is the bridge between God and the human person, participating in an extraordinary way in a way of being God who shares with us His decision to be man. When Jesus announces the inauguration of that new world he always does so in terms of joy and hope. "It is a time for rejoicing and not for fasting" (Lk. 2:29). This is why Jesus identifies himself with the promised Messiah in the history of his people: his mission is to inaugurate the fulfillment of God's promise to people and to the world, and to show, with his humanity, the direction that traces the path to full happiness. Whenever Jesus speaks to us of the Kingdom, he involves

us as indispensable actors in its realization, because God expects the assent of our freedom and invites us to feel fortunate for it: to participate in the expansion of the Kingdom of God is our way of drawing closer to him and attaining the dignity with which we have been created. Jesus announces and summons at the same time: every announcement is a call to change; he calls us to conversion as liberation from the slavery and bondage that paralyze us (Mk 1:15).

### **A proper understanding of the person**

Up to this point we have insisted on the historical dimension of the Kingdom of God, and it is impossible for us to do otherwise, however, the Kingdom of God itself is much more than just a response to any situation of injustice and disorder in coexistence. The Kingdom of God is "salvation", thus we notice that, in order to avoid a certain social or cultural pragmatism, or to submit ourselves to an ideological interpretation, we have the obligation to stop in the reflection on the transcendent dimension of the Kingdom of God, salvation projects us to God, to the Eternal Life, the Christian answers and commitments in time, coherently with the Gospel, surpass the only historical projection to reach the fullness of life forever. In order to embrace this dimension, we will make use of some considerations on the understanding of the mystery of the human person. That is to say, a brief anthropological development that includes the transcendence of which we are capable and avoids the temptation of immediatism. We will simply list some very basic principles.

1. God reveals himself. Our understanding of the human person has as its starting point the revelation of the triune God revealed in Christ. That is to say that if we wish to know the human being, we

must have recourse to revelation. We discover who we are in the light of Jesus Christ, the revealer of God. The Second Vatican Council points out that Christ, in the revelation of the Father and of his love, fully reveals man to man himself and makes known to him his highest vocation (cf. GS 22). As the recipient of revelation, the human being is its object. As the recipient of the Father's love, man comes to know to the ultimate consequences of who he is. In this sense, theological anthropology, always in dialogue with philosophy and the sciences that contribute their knowledge, contemplates all this from a conditioning point of view: the relationship of man with God, because we consider that this is the deepest dimension of our being and allows us to recognize ourselves as the privileged object of God's love and the only creature on earth that God has willed for himself (GS 24), and is called to the communion of life with God the Trinity himself.

2. What is proper to this understanding of the human being, which is made known to us in Jesus, is that relationship of love and fatherhood that God intends to establish with all humans in Jesus, his Son. We are called by grace to be sons, to participate in the Holy Spirit in the relationship proper only to Jesus, the Son.
3. This call and this gift presuppose our freedom. Our existence is given to us by God, who creates us in order to call us to the grace of communion with Him. We have our own consistency, not without relation to the Creator from whom everything is given to us; this consistency is necessary so that the call, which is addressed to each one of us, can be given.
4. We are marked by the experience of sin. Created out of love, we do not always



respond with love; to varying degrees we are capable of responding to God not only with indifference, but also with an explicit rejection of God. This is a negative dimension, because it should not be, because it is destructive of man himself, however, it is part of existence. And we cannot ignore it, especially because the New Testament teaches us that God's love, manifested in Christ, becomes forgiveness and mercy, acceptance of the sinner and justification.

5. By his death and resurrection, Christ has conquered sin and death. And our insertion into him through baptism is a decisive event in each of us. Through him we exist in faith, hope and charity.
6. Our very condition as creatures includes the social vocation, we are in relationship, capable of solidarity.
7. The entire world around us, in which we move and exist, is also God's work.
8. Our ultimate vocation is the state of fullness by God's grace.
9. We are body. We often hear people say "I have my body", in reality it is not about having a body as a possession but about recognizing ourselves as a body, and in fact we are a body insofar as we are in the world; the world is not for us a mere circumstance of place, but a constitutive element; we are in time, precisely because we are body we are immersed in the temporal dimension of continuous and successive duration, this leads us to think of our itinerant and pilgrim condition in which it is up to us to learn, correct, convert and repent; we are mortal, death de-worlds us and de-temporalizes us, it removes us from the temporal sphere that constitutes us. In this sense death indicates an end to the constitutive dimensions of body, world and time, which makes us think that we

must take it very seriously; we are sexed, it is clear in the conception of the human being offered in the creation stories, that we are realized in the complementary polarity of male and female. This sexual differentiation, implied in the corporeality, confers to the human being a double affective tonality, a double mode of human installation and of social relation correlatively different, because in the sexuality of man is projected his way of being in the world; we are a communicative expression, through the body we tell ourselves, the body is the mediation of every encounter, especially the face, which, as someone has said, is the place where, par excellence, nature becomes porous to the person; we are historical and creative, the historicity, as a transcendental structure of man, opens him to a commitment within history in which he must project his existence, personally and communally.

10. We are soul. This anthropological concept expresses the uniqueness of the human being and his or her constitutive openness to God, which underlies the biblical category of the image of God. By virtue of our created nature, we are in a position to encounter God.

The person is that gift and mystery that each one is for himself and for others.

The Kingdom of God for Jesus is the way in which God manifests his action in the midst of history. In this way, the Kingdom of God is a message of strength in the present and hope in the future for the poor, the hungry, the afflicted: for all the unfortunate. The Kingdom of God is translated into attitudes of welcome for sinners, respect, and vindication for stigmatized women,

healing for the sick, liberation from “unclean spirits”. A historical manifestation of the Kingdom of the Father is fraternity among human beings. Accepting salvation in God the Father places human life under the real paradigm of mercy, which is not a feeling but a fundamental attitude, mercy “is made” in the day to day.

Another consequence of the proclamation of the kingdom is the ability to be inclusive. This derives from the practice of Jesus himself, who does not seek the renewal of Israel by reinforcing the laws of purity, but by announcing the nearness of a merciful God. What would help us to arrive at this conviction? How can we communicate that the Kingdom of God is among us and begins here and now? The Kingdom of God is in the human heart, what would help us to discover it?

### **Preferential option for the poor as a theological category**

In our last section we would like to dwell on an always controversial topic, because we assume that it challenges us and makes us uncomfortable. In the same concrete community experience, we find different views and understandings. At the beginning of this chapter, we noted that the interlocutors of the proclamation, and we can say, of the life of Jesus, are the poor, which is why we feel obliged to stop and reflect on this aspect.

In the Puebla Document we can read:

“The immense majority of our brothers and sisters continue to live in a situation of poverty and even misery, which has worsened.... (DP 1135); they lack the most elementary material goods in contrast to the accumulation of wealth in the hands of a minority.... The poor

not only lack material goods, but also on the level of human dignity they lack full social and political participation”. (Ref. DP 297) “The Church’s evangelical commitment, as the Pope has said, must be like that of Christ, a commitment to the most needy.... For this reason alone, the poor deserve preferential attention, whatever their moral or personal situation” (DP 1141).

The option for the poor is demanded by the situation of institutionalized injustice in which we live, according to the expression of the Bishops of Puebla. Already before, at the Conference in Medellin, they had spoken of “institutionalized violence” (DM 16), and Pope John Paul II in his homily at the Shrine of Zapopan in Mexico (1979) referred to the “structure of sin”.

The preferential option is directed to the poor as far as they are poor, because, as John Paul II says, the poor are the favorites of God, who sent his poor Son and constituted his Church with poor and needy humanity in view. The preferential option for the poor is an obligatory attitude of every Christian and also of the Church as a whole.

The pure rationality of an ethic today calls for opting for the oppressed even without explicit reference to the Gospel. It is incorrect to think that the option for the oppressed can only be based on the Gospel, which has led many to lose faith. Moreover, the concretization of the option for the poor in a given historical moment requires, in order to become operative, the social sciences and the situations that exist in each of them. This means that the option for the oppressed must be illuminated by the light and power of the Gospel,

The Bishops go on to describe the concrete



faces in which “the situation of widespread extreme poverty” is expressed (DP 31), as follows: children struck by poverty before they are born, frustrated youth in rural and suburban areas, indigenous people marginalized and living in inhuman situations, landless peasants subjected to exploitation, workers poorly paid and deprived of their rights, urban marginalized and overcrowded in the face of the ostentation of wealth, the elderly marginalized and abandoned... (DP 32-39). (DP 32-39). These concrete faces express “the situation of inhuman poverty in which millions of Latin Americans live”, which is judged as “the most devastating and humiliating scourge” (DP 29). Poverty is not mere lack, it is not mere difficulty in mastering life, but difficulty in living caused by others and added ignominy introduced by others. Poverty then is sin, “cries out to heaven” (DM, I Justice), “is contrary to the Creator’s plan and to the honor it deserves”, (DP 28).

In the same way, he also asserts the growing gap between rich and poor: “The truth is that the distance between the many who have little and the few who have much is increasing more and more” (DP 2). Poverty is thus not only a lack of life, not only an unjust lack of life caused by oppressors, but it is also the formal and most radical negation of fraternity, of the ideal of the kingdom of God. Since the roots of oppression are structural, this poverty, historical and dialectical, becomes massive and lasting; it is not accidental and demands profound changes in structures (DP 30). Poverty is then not only a lack of life, not only an unjust lack of life caused by oppressors, but it is also the formal and most radical negation of fraternity. It is certain that in our Mission experiences we will meet the poor. Therefore, it is important that we become aware of the reasons for the

situation of the poor worldwide and where we will go on Mission. We will encounter poor people and poor communities. They are our impoverished brothers and sisters.

The preferential option for the poor continues to be present in Latin American and Caribbean reflection, and we find it in the Aparecida Document in 391, ss.

### III. CONCLUSION

Gustavo Gutiérrez (2007) shows us how the life of the poor is a situation of hunger and exploitation, insufficient health care and lack of decent housing, difficult access to school education, low wages and unemployment, struggle for their rights and repression. But that is not all, according to the author, being poor is also a way of feeling, of knowing, of reasoning, of making friends, of loving, of believing, of suffering, of celebrating, of praying. Why opt for the poor?

What should our attitude be? How can we dialogue with them about human rights and the rights of creation? What would help us to deepen our preparation? How can we open ourselves to learn from them, what small things can we give to awaken their conscience, to value their efforts of organization and commitment to claim their rights, to value their culture? They are our brothers.

## **WORKSHEET 3:** **THE KINGDOM AS A MISSION** **HORIZON**

### **I. GUIDING ELEMENTS OF CAM6**

- **Biblical text:** Jesus said to his disciples: "You will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth". Acts 1:8
- **Theme:** Evangelizers with Spirit to the ends of the earth
- **Motto:** America, with the power of the Spirit, witnesses to Christ
- **Objective:** To promote the Church's mission ad gentes with new ardor, walking together in listening to the Spirit, in order to be witnesses of faith in Jesus Christ in the reality of our peoples to the ends of the earth.
- **Hymn:** Witnesses of the Living Christ  
Let's sing the chorus together...

Look how they love each other! Look how they walk!  
America, with the power of the Spirit.  
America, witnesses of the Living Christ.

### **II. OBJECTIVE FOR THIS THIRD** **WORKING MEETING**

**Specific Objective:** To reflect on the Kingdom of God as the horizon of the Mission, considering that this is the main message of the Person of Jesus, so that our missionary action may be a follow up to Him, especially among the poorest.

### **III. PRAYER FOR THE SIXTH** **AMERICAN MISSIONARY** **CONGRESS**

We unite ourselves to the prayer that Pope Francis gave us for this Sixth American Missionary Congress highlighting what it implies for us in this meeting. In the highlighted fragments we can have a brief moment of silence to deepen the prayer. During or after the prayer, you can share some resonance that has touched your heart.

O merciful Father,  
that you revealed in your Son the "Good News",  
announced in these lands of America by so many missionaries, with words and deeds; help us rediscover our vocation as baptized persons to give a new impetus to our missionary action  
proclaiming, like them, the joy of the Gospel.

Oh my,  
that you pour out your Holy Spirit to  
**RENEW THE FACE OF THE EARTH,**  
**HURT BY INJUSTICE AND SUFFERING;**  
give us strength to walk as God's people,  
in synodality and mutual listening,  
towards the next American Missionary Congress,  
witnessing together the love that conquers the world.

O God and our Father,  
that you chose Mary as a model for evangelization  
to offer Christ to all mankind;  
imitating his example of dedication, let us  
and sustained by her maternal and provident care,  
let us always be your missionary disciples to the ends of the earth.

Amen.

### IV. ILLUMINATING TEXT

#### Lk 4:14-21

*Jesus returned to Galilee in the power of the Spirit, and his fame spread throughout that region. He taught in the synagogues of the Jews, and all praised him.*

*He came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, and on the Sabbath, he went to the synagogue, as was his custom. He stood up to do the reading, and the book of the prophet Isaiah was passed to him. Jesus unrolled the book and found the passage where it was written:*

*The Spirit of the Lord is upon me. He has anointed me to bring good news to the poor, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and to the blind who will soon see, to send the oppressed free, and to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor. Jesus then rolled up the book, gave it back to the attendant and sat down, while all those present had their eyes fixed on him. And he began to say to them, "Today news is coming to you of how these prophetic words are being fulfilled."*

### V. BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE THEOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

What is decisive in Christianity is the person of Jesus Christ. For Jesus, the Kingdom of God is what happens when God reigns instead of any other power. It means that peace, justice, and love reign among human beings and in nature. A kingdom of justice and service that must grow in the midst of people and the world. Mission begins with that contemplative gaze that allows us to discover the signs of God's reign present in the world and that which opposes this reign.

When Jesus indicates that his kingdom is not of this world, he does not do so to distance us from it, but to discover that the logic of his action is different. His logic is the truth, "I have come to be a witness to the truth". A truth that overcomes legalisms, falsehoods, hatred, violence, exclusion, and all kinds of evils that alienate human beings from that which does not allow them to live their deepest reality: "made in his image and likeness" (Gen 1:26). A kingdom that seeks to liberate people from all that dehumanizes them and makes them suffer that responds to what they most desire: to live in dignity.... Whenever Jesus speaks to us about the Kingdom, he involves us as indispensable actors in its realization and invites us to feel fortunate for it.

A Kingdom that recognizes the human person at its center, in which a seed is sown and becomes so large that thousands of birds come to take shelter in its branches (Mt 13:31-32). The one who waters this seed is the Spirit who pours love on the soil of our heart. A Kingdom in which God manifests his action in the midst of history. A message that gives strength in the present and hope for the future, especially for the poor, the hungry, the afflicted: for all the unfortunate. Where the preferential option for the poor is present. Poverty most of the time caused by others; sin, which "cries out to heaven" (Medellin, justice 1), "contrary to the Creator's plan and to the honor it deserves", (Puebla 28).

We will certainly encounter the poor in our Mission experiences. Therefore, it is important that we become aware of the reasons for the situation of the poor worldwide and where we will go on Mission. We will encounter poor people and poor communities. They are our impoverished brothers and sisters. What should our attitude be? They are our brothers.





## VI. QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

**1. What place does the theme of the Kingdom of God occupy in our reflection and missionary action?**

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**2. Are the poor the object of our reflection and action? What elements reflect this option or non-option in our community or apostolic group?**

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**3. What processes of discernment take place in our space of reflection and missionary action in which the dynamism of the anointing and sending spirit is present?**

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## VIII. MARIAN PRAYER

### *Wedding at Cana*

*“Three days later there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. Jesus and his disciples were also invited to the wedding. And when there was no wine, because the wedding wine had run out, his mother said to Jesus, ‘They have no wine.’” (Jn.2.1-3).*

*Jesus’ ministry begins at a feast where the wine is missing. Jesus himself compares the Kingdom to a wedding feast. Mary’s action allows the feast to continue. Let us ask Mary to intercede so that all people may participate in the banquet of the Kingdom of God.*

### Ave Maria

Hail Mary, Hail Mary,  
full of grace;  
the Lord is with thee.  
Blessed art thou  
among all women,  
and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.  
Holy Mary, Mother of God,  
pray for us sinners,  
now and at the hour of our death. Amen





# PRAYER FOR THE SIXTH AMERICAN MISSIONARY CONGRESS

Puerto Rico, November 19-24, 2024

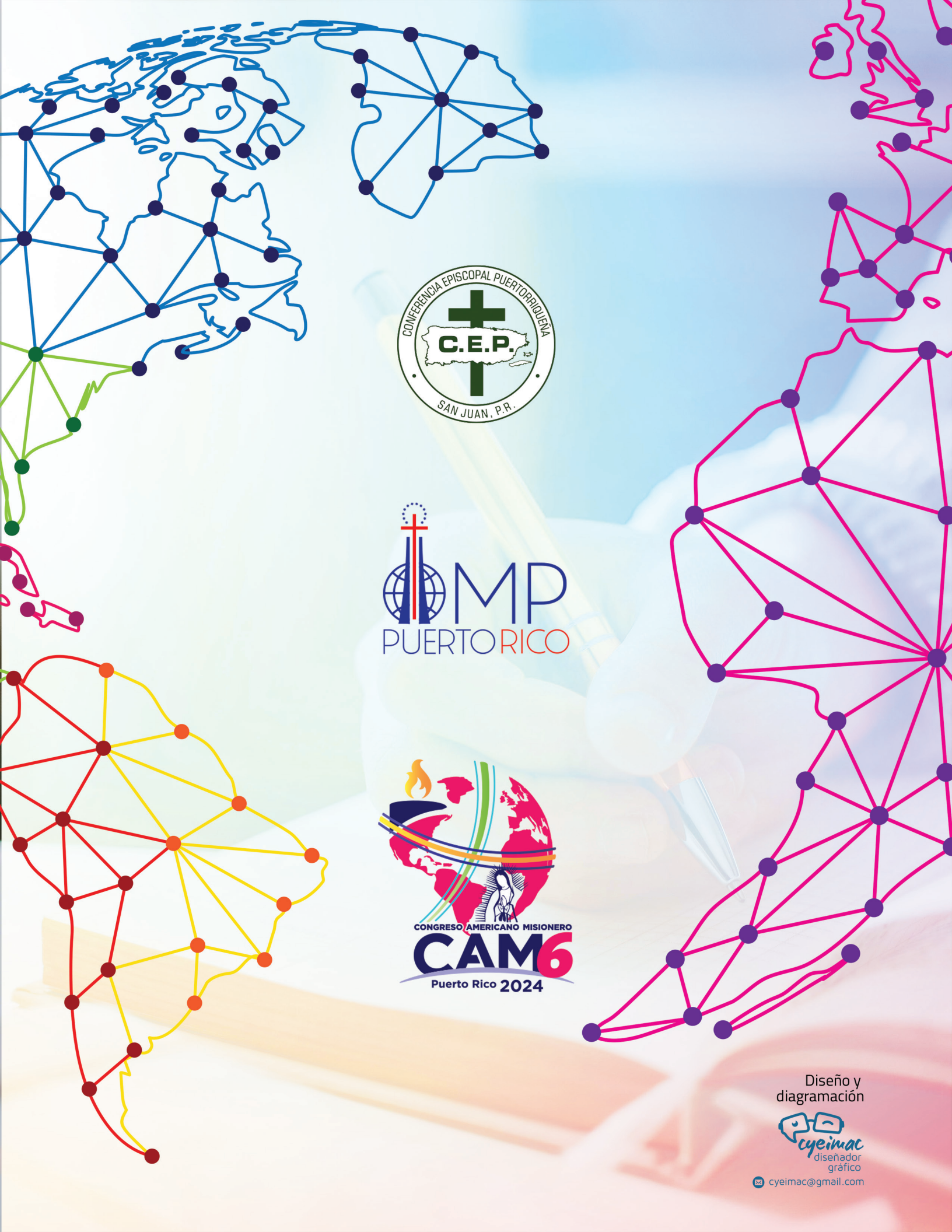
O merciful Father,  
who revealed in your Son the «Good News»,  
announced in these lands of America  
by so many missionaries, in word and deed;  
help us to rediscover our vocation as baptized persons  
in order to give renewed life to our missionary activity  
proclaiming, like them, the joy of the Gospel.

O God,  
you pour out your Holy Spirit to renew the face of the earth,  
wounded by injustice and suffering;  
give us strength to walk, as God's people,  
in synodality and mutual listening,  
towards the next American Missionary Congress,  
witnessing together the love that conquers the world.

O God and our Father,  
you chose Mary as a model of evangelization  
to offer Christ to all humanity;  
grant that, imitating her example of dedication  
and sustained by her maternal and providential care,  
may we always be your missionary disciples  
to the ends of the earth.

Amen.





Diseño y diagramación



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