



Irish Apostolate, USA

August 22, 2006

The event of Pentecost presents a picture of people from different races, languages and backgrounds who were enriched by the preaching of the Apostles. This is an inspiring image. It is an historical fact, a real event; it is also an image of how we are called to be apostles in our time. There is always the temptation to stay with what we know, with what is familiar, with what is comfortable. If this is our perspective, we can limit the effect of the Spirit of God who constantly promises to draw us together in support of, in solidarity with and into unity with one another.

- The Spirit of Pentecost is at work in our individual and shared mission. As members of the Irish Episcopal Commission for Emigrants and Migrants our primary concern is in outreaching to our own emigrants and to immigrants to our shores.
- The Spirit of Pentecost is at work in the hearts of immigrants, who leave home and all that is familiar to them. They seek new hope and opportunity, should be accepted and be facilitated in settling into their new surroundings. The indigenous population should be proactive in this regard in welcoming, accepting and assisting them.
- The Spirit of Pentecost is at work when different nationalities with their own unique languages, customs and beliefs, express their solidarity with the undocumented people, which include many of our own emigrants, who were the primary focus of my interest. I witnessed this for myself when I visited the U.S. recently.

The Justice for Immigrants Campaign undertaken by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops is the work of Pentecost in our day. May the Holy Spirit be the inspiration, the strength which we need, as we work on behalf of all those who seek that to which they are entitled. May we all commit to create a world where people do not need to leave their home to seek a better and brighter future. If they do have to leave home, may they be supported in their efforts in establishing their rights, expressing their legitimate freedom and finding acceptance in their host country.

The Bishops in Ireland join with their brother Bishops in the United States in working towards a comprehensive and compassionate solution to the current immigration crisis in the USA

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "Seamus Hegarty".

Most Reverend Seamus Hegarty
Bishop of Derry
Chairman, Irish Episcopal Commission for Emigrants