

The Future of the Latino Church in the US



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National Latino Evangelical Coalition
Sent Summit
Orlando, Florida
October 3, 2026

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The Future of Latino Churches in the US

Greetings. I have been invited to come to you today to speak about the future of the Latino church in the US.

Let me begin by saying that I am honored and pleased to be here. But I must immediately add that I find this invitation surprising. I am not surprised that I have been invited to speak about the church. After all, the church has long been my home.

But I am surprised by being invited to speak about the future, for I have never considered myself a futurologist. As a matter of fact, I have repeatedly failed as a futurologist.

Let me give you an example: I was at a worldwide student gathering in Rangoon, Burma, on the 31st of December 1958. When someone asked me what I thought would happen in Cuba, and for how long dictator Fulgencio Batista would stand, I told them that I expected the struggle to go on for a long time. The next morning, on the first of January 1959, my Burmese roommate was not in our room. He had left the radio going. I was paying no attention to it, because it was in Burmese, and I couldn't understand a word of it. Suddenly I could understand a few words: Havana #%\$ Cuba &8\$Q% Batista \$#%@ Castro %\$&#. By the time my roommate got back, they were talking about something else. I did not know that Batista had fled the country and Castro had taken over until a couple of days later. That is the kind of futurologist I am!

So, why invite a historian to speak about the future? That is an important question. And the answer, when we stop to think about it, is quite simple: Practically the only way that we can know or even guess something about the future is by knowing the past. The reason why we expect the sun to rise tomorrow morning is that for ages and ages people have experienced the sun rising every morning. If humankind did not have that experience; if we did not know that past, we would never be able to foretell that the sun will rise. When economists tell us that they expect the stock market to go up, or the price of a barrel of oil to remain steady, the only basis that they have for saying such things is what has happened in the past.

One important point to which we will return is that the future that various economists predict depends on which past experiences they think are applicable to this particular time and the coming future. One sees a parallelism between some conditions today and others in a particular point in the past and predicts a bull market. Another sees other parallelisms with a different time in the past and predicts a bear market. In brief, the future they predict depends on the past they choose.

The same is true when we speak about the future of the Latino church. In a way, the only experience we have is what we know of the past—or of the immediate present, which is rapidly becoming the past. We may expect the past to continue as it was. Or we can expect it to be radically different. But ultimately the way that we have to make such a decision is to think about how the future will resemble the past, or about how different it will be.

Thus, I do not come to you as a futurologist. I come to you as a historian. And as a historian who is not very good at future projections. If a prophet is someone who sees the future, I am neither a prophet nor the son of a prophet.

As a starting point, I do come to you as a historian, trying to catch a glimpse into the future by looking, not at a crystal ball, but at the past.

But, let me warn you: I come not just as a historian. I come also as a theologian, and as a believer. I will try to speak first simply as a historian, and perhaps even as a historian turned futurologist. But then, by your leave, I will try to speak to you as a believer to other believers, because from that perspective we will be able to say much more about the future.

Now, as a historian I can begin by giving you a few facts based on the official census of the US, which for several reasons has always undercounted the Latino population. Obviously, since that is what the Census is all about, please forgive me if I bombard you with figures for just a few minutes. It is not important that you remember these figures. Just note their general flow and direction.

On the basis of official US numbers, I can tell you that according to the census of 1980, in the ten years before that, while the general population had grown by 11.5%, the Latino population had grown by 61%.

Talking about predictions of the future, it is important to note that, also in 1980, the Census published not one set of projections of Hispanic population growth, but three sets: a minimum, a middle, and a maximum. According to that projection, made 40 years ago, the absolute maximum of the Latino population by 2080, that is, 54 years from now, would be 17.6% of the total population. Now, in 2026, 54 years before the time when we were expected to be a bit less than 18%, the census tells us that we are 20.5 % of the total population! And we still have 54 years to go! Let me repeat that in another way: In 1980, when I was 43 years old, the futurologists in the Census Bureau told me that in 2080, long after I would have died, the Latino population would probably be less than it is now, when I am still alive, and there are still 54 years to go until 2080! So much for futurology!

Another important fact is that, despite the general impression that this growth is mostly due to new immigrants, the truth is that most of this growth is not due directly to immigration, but because of the birth rate. About 20 years ago, Stan Perea, at that time Executive Director of AETH, examining the census data, concluded that more white Anglo women died each year than Anglo children were born. In contrast, for each Latina who died, nine children were born. This wide gap had to do with cultural and other differences, but mostly with the much younger age of the Latino population. It is not clear in what direction or how rapidly this figure changes as the average age of Latinas rises. But even so, there is no doubt that soon, no matter what happens with immigration or how many people are deported, we will be a fourth of the total population of the US and its possessions.

Also, as most of the growth is by birth, this growing Latino population born and raised in the US is also becoming more engaged in the life of the society at large, beyond the limits of our own population. Signs of all this may be seen everywhere. All you have to do is look at us here. One clear sign is the very language I am using. My mother tongue is Spanish, but if I want to speak to the younger generations, it is best to do so in English, because—even though our population is increasingly bilingual—many are more at home in English than in Spanish.

All of this causes various reactions among the rest of the population. Several decades ago, I read an article in a popular nationwide news magazine under the heading “Hispanics: The Coming Largest Minority.” Between the lines, I heard a somewhat different message: “Watch out, Blacks, the Hispanics are coming.” That message was, and in some cases still is, the first of many attempts to halt our progress, to provoke other marginalized people to marginalize us.

Fortunately, in part thanks to many churches, and in part thanks to the obvious racism of many powerful political figures, that strategy seems to be failing. All across the country we find coalitions of various marginalized people. Most notably, African American leaders are joining with Latino leaders, often building bridges in which Afro-Latinos have an important place.

What does all of this mean for the immediate future of the Latino church? This is a difficult question, depending on the immediate future of the nation and its politics. Some quietly, and some openly, exploit racism. In my own state, a man hoping to become governor with the

support of the president, is running an ad in which he quietly and with a cynical smile says to “illegals”: “If you are not deported, you will be departed.” To him, that is cute. To me, that sounds like a death threat.

(By the way, the very title of “illegal” has insidious undertones. Al Capone was never illegal. He committed many horrendous illegal acts. But, even so, he himself was not illegal. Mass shooters are certainly acting illegally, but they are not “illegal.” But if you speak with an accent, or look different, no matter what your behavior, you are suspected of being “illegal.”)

Back to the matter of population growth, most present-day projections indicate that the rate of growth of the Latino population—while still much faster than the growth of the population at large—will decline. This projection is based both on demographic factors and on political circumstances. As to demographics, I have already mentioned the rising average age of Latinas, and the resulting slowing of the birth rate. Also, there is an expectation that, as education and social status improve, there will be a parallel decline in the size of Latino families.

Politically, there is no doubt that the repressive measures that we all know have curtailed immigration. It is not clear for how long such policies will continue, not only because governments and policies change, but also because without a flow of immigrants the economy of this country, and its way of life, cannot survive.

But probably a more important factor than any repressive measure is that the difference between the US and the traditional countries of origin of most immigrants is diminishing. This is such an important factor in migration that until 1910, when conditions in Mexico began to deteriorate, there were more people moving from the United States to Mexico than from Mexico to the United States. As in the case of water, it is the difference in level that determines the flow.

Some time ago, a leading political figure in this country, in his usual uncouthness, called our countries of origin a name that I shall not repeat. I suppose part of his reason for calling us by that name was that in many of our countries those who lose an election claim they were cheated. Until very recently, that never happened in the US. In “those” countries, legitimate laws are used for the illegitimate prosecution of political dissidents. Presidents or dictators act without the constitutionally required consent of legislative bodies. People live in fear of the very police forces that are supposed to protect them. The rich cut social programs that are supposedly too expensive, while their own wealth soars into billions and more billions; inflation seems unstoppable; the freedom of the press is threatened; the vote of those who do not agree with the government is curtailed and disempowered by perhaps legal, but certainly immoral maneuvers. Supposedly, all this happens only in “those” countries. But we know better.

Does that sound familiar? Who wants to move from a small hell to a bigger one? Along these lines, one may note that Latino migration into Europe and Australia is growing. One may also

note that this is particularly true of the “brain drain” from Latin America, which now flows to Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and even China.

Perhaps the elections this coming month, and the response of those in high places, will give us a hint as to which direction the nation is moving, and therefore as to the context in which the Latino church will find itself in the immediate future. Again, I am not a futurologist, but in a nation as divided as ours, in a nation where the road to power has become demagoguery and money invested in the mass media, no matter in what direction the political winds blow, the church too will be divided. As some did in the times of Elisha, and as some did in the times of Constantine and his successors, some will bow before the new Baals of our day. They will be famous. They will be cuddled in the mantles of power. Others will take the opposite tack. They will reject the Baals of our day. They will insist on the connection between love and justice. For that reason, they will be marginalized, criticized, and attacked.

They will congratulate themselves for their faithfulness, and this will be their downfall! They will hate those who hate them. I see this every day, not just in the Latino church, but also in the church at large. We have accepted and internalized the atmosphere of hatred and prejudice that politically demagoguery has fomented.

That is normal; BUT IT IS NOT THE GOSPEL. That is natural; BUT GRACE OVERCOMES THE SINFUL POWER OF NATURE. That is to be expected, but our Lord comes unexpectedly, like a thief in the

night. And he expects us to act unexpectedly, guided not by what is normal, natural, graceless, but by grace, by the gospel, by gracious gospel-like love.

I must confess that when I think of the topic I have been assigned—the future of the Latino church—my first reaction is one of discouragement. Even after the present conditions pass—and they will pass—we will have before us a church in need of reconciliation, in a nation also needing reconciliation. If that is the future we expect, we better begin practicing for it. We better start forgiving. We better start loving.

But we must go beyond that. Perhaps we should go to that so well known, and so often misinterpreted, declaration in the Gospel of John: “for God so loved the world.” The world, not the church! Just as God did not make humankind for the sake of the Sabbath, but the Sabbath for the sake of humankind, God did not love the world for the sake of the church, but the church for the sake of the world.

In the context of the topic I have been assigned, this means that our main concern should not be the future of the church itself, but the role of the church in the future of the world—or, in the case of our topic, not just the future of the Latino church in itself, but the role of the Latino church in the future of the US. The US is not just the context in which we are the church; the US, like every other nation, is the object of the love of God that the church must proclaim and demonstrate.

This is important, not only in religious matters but also in political matters. The figures of the census I quoted a few minutes ago are already reflected on the present political campaigns. Some politicians seek our votes in many different ways. Others, knowing that they will not have our votes, use us as boogeymen to scare people into voting for them. Such is the case of that already mentioned billionaire politician in my own state who, apparently aware that his own economic status and how he got there are not a political asset, promises that, if he wins, “illegals” who are not deported will be “departed.”

Leaving aside such bigoted statements, there is no doubt that soon—and in many cases already—our vote will be important.

This places a heavy burden of responsibility on our churches. As I have repeatedly seen and said, in many of our *barrios* most of the venues with a long history of permanence, in which Latino voices are heard, and in which the values of Latinos and Latinas are formed, are the churches. It is in our churches that we must learn the values that should govern the rest of our lives. It is in our churches that we learn and practice the respect for others that is essential for any society to survive. Quite often, it is in our churches that our young people learn that there is an alternative to the violence and mistrust that they see constantly around them. It is in our churches that hope flourishes even when surrounded by poverty, marginalization, and violence.

But it is also in some of our churches that our youth are told that violence and poverty do not matter, as long as you are a believer. It is in some of our churches that we see pastors whose leadership practices are dictatorial. It is in some of our churches that we are told that if we believe in God and behave as we should, everything will work out, and we will be healthy, and God will bless us with abundant riches. It is in some of our churches that believers are told that the poor are poor because they are lazy, or because they misbehave, and that the rich are rich because they deserve special blessings from God.

It would seem that at this point I have abandoned my assigned theme, which is the *future* of the church, and digressed into the present. But, as St. Augustine clearly said 16 centuries ago, we always live in the present, which is just that fleeting moment in which what was future becomes past. The past is memory. The future is hope and fear. The present is that instant in which what was hope becomes reality or disappointment, and then a memory. In a way, the future is enclosed in the present, as an oak tree is enclosed in an acorn. The wise look at the acorn and see the potentiality of an oak tree. The foolish despair because they see no connection between those beautiful and mighty oak trees that have been there from the time of their ancestors and now provide shade and beauty, and this insignificant acorn they hold in their hand.

In a way, the future, like an acorn, comes out of this apparently insignificant instant that is the present. In a way, the church of the future is already here, like an acorn in our hands, just waiting to become what it has been called to be, what it is already beginning to be.

But surprisingly, it is not only that the future is the result of the present, but also that the present is the result of the future. When you go out your driveway, what determines what way you turn is not based on where you are coming from (your past) or where you are (your present) but also where you are going (your intended future). If a young woman intends to be a medical doctor, she does not spend much of her time in frivolous activities that detract from her studies. When she declines an invitation to go to a party, she does not make that decision only on the basis of her own inclinations, or of her present circumstances. She makes that decision because she sees her future as that of a medical doctor.

The same is true of the church. Its future, its vision of the future, its intended future, shapes its present.

If our vision of the future of the Latino church in the US is a church that enjoys the support of powerful political figures, what we will do today is approach the powerful, offering our support in exchange for a bit of theirs. We will bless what they want us to bless, say what they want us to say, and do what they want us to do.

If our vision of our future is a church that has nothing to do with the messy realities of the world, a church that makes people feel good because it is a shelter against such messy realities, right now we will be a church that values its own purity above anything else, and that therefore

never speaks of issues such as poverty, racism, misogyny, or anything having to do with justice. After all, letting such issues crawl into the life of the church threatens our peace and our purity.

If our vision of our future is a church that is convinced that God has placed it where it is so that it may preach the whole gospel to the whole world, we will be a church that does precisely that: a church that speaks of freedom from sin and of freedom from injustice; of freedom both for itself and for everyone else; of God's love, not just for believers, nor even preferably for believers, but fully and equally, and undeservedly for all. We will be a church that realizes that Christian perfection is not a sanctimonious purity but is rather being perfect as our Father in heaven is perfect, "for he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the righteous and on the unrighteous" (Mt 5.45).

In a word: not only does the present shape the future, but also the future we envision shapes the present in which we live.

In ancient times, and until fairly recently, people expressed this by speaking of two kinds of causes. Today, when we speak of causes and consequences, we envision a unidirectional order in which causes happen first, and consequences follow. The ancients also understood this: Things happen because something in the past makes them happen. But they also understood that there is another kind of cause. That young woman whom I mentioned earlier, who decides to decline an invitation to a party, makes that decision because she intends to become a

medical doctor. In her case, although there may be many other causes, the determining cause was not the past, nor even the present, but the future. One could even say that she “remembered her future,” and that memory of the future guided her present decision.

If the notion of remembering the future surprises you, you are not alone. It also surprises Alice, of *Wonderland* fame. In the book *Through the Looking Glass*, there is an interesting dialogue between Alice and the White Queen in which the Queen is speaking of the advantage of “having a memory that works both ways.”

“I am sure mine only works one way,” Alice remarked. “I can’t remember things before they happen.”

“It’s a poor sort of memory that only works backwards,” the Queen remarked. (chapter 5)

What the Queen is saying, and what I am trying to say less cryptically, is that things do not happen only because the past pushes them, but also because the future calls or pulls them.

For generations, and until relatively recent times, people expressed this by speaking of two kinds of causes, two reasons why things happen: the *efficient causes* and the *final causes*. The efficient cause of a baseball flying over the fence is the movement of a bat, and the efficient cause of the movement of the bat is the player’s muscle. And so on.

But it is possible to think in a different way: We can imagine that the ball was destined to fly over the fence, and that was the reason why the bat hit it; and that the bat was destined to hit it. And so on.

That sounds crazy to us, as it sounded crazy to Alice. Yet, when you got to the end of the driveway a few days ago, and your car turned right, the efficient cause was that you turned the wheel to the right. But there was also a final cause: You turned right because you were going to the dentist. The efficient cause was the turning of the wheel, but the final cause was your going to the dentist.

A way to think about all of this is to distinguish between “because” and “so that.” Things happen both “because” and “so that.” In the Bible, things happen not only “because” but also “so that.” At the very beginning of the New Testament, in the Gospel of Matthew, we find quite a few “so that’s”; and many of them are a “so that” that fulfills a past promise. After telling the story of the birth of Jesus, Matthew tells us that this happened “to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet.” In other words, *so that* what had been spoken through the prophet would be fulfilled. *“Todo esto aconteció para que se cumpliera lo que dijo el Señor por medio del profeta”*. “*Para que*”, not “*porque*”.

One reason why it is so difficult for us to think in terms of final causes is the success of the physical sciences, particularly in the last few centuries. Efficient causes are precisely what the

physical sciences study. Physical sciences set aside any possibility or interest in a “so that” as the reason why something happens and focus exclusively in the “because.” They do this even while the scientists themselves conduct experiments *so that* they can understand events, write reports *so that* others may read them, and talk among themselves *so that* new truths might be discovered.

All of this might seem like idle speculation. But the truth is that it has far-reaching theological implications, and implications for the life of the church. When today we talk about God as the “final” cause of all things, we mean something very different than what was meant by most Christian writers in antiquity, throughout the Middle Ages, during the Reformation, and until well advanced into the period of modernity, before the amazing success of the physical sciences.

Today, when we hear someone say that God is the “final cause” of all things, we understand that to mean that God is the creator of all things, that if we go far back, from the most immediate “because” to the very first “because,” that first “because” is God.

There is nothing wrong with that. It is certainly true. God is the first “because.” That is what Christians through the ages meant when they spoke of God as the first *efficient* cause of all things.

But that is not what Christians through the ages have meant when they spoke of God as the *final cause* of all things. What they meant is that God is the goal that calls all things into existence, the goal that constantly pulls them towards their future. God is not only at the beginning, but also at the end. God is at the beginning, in the placid garden of Eden; and God is at the end in the heavenly city, amid the great multitude, from every tribe and people and nation; a multitude so large that no one will be able to count it. God is calling humankind from the garden to the city. From the idyllic quiet of a garden to the boisterous celebration of that great multitude, singing the praises of God and of the Lamb.

The same creative Word who in the beginning said, “Let there be light,” and there was light, in the end will say “Let there be love; let there be justice, let there be peace.” And, as always from the beginning, what God calls will leap into existence. As the Seer of Patmos announced, God will wipe away every tear from their eyes. I would venture to add: And God will wash away all hatred from their hearts, and all burdens from their backs, and all guilt from their consciences.

All of this brings us back to the theme assigned to me, “The future of the Latino Church in the US.” I would now suggest that, although I am invited to play the futurologist, and present not one but many possible futures, the word “The” is or should be capitalized. What is most important, what must rule our path as we move ahead in future days, is not just a possible future described by some very fallible and questionable futurologists, such as myself, but THE

future, the one future, the only future, the inescapable future, the final cause of all things, the final rest of all movement.

What can I tell you about that future? Fortunately, very little. I say “fortunately,” because any attempt I make to imagine it will fall far short of the reality God has promised. If I could describe the Kingdom, if I could answer all sorts of questions about it, it wouldn’t be worth much. What I can certainly tell you is that the Kingdom of God is better than anything we can imagine. And for that we must be grateful. THE future, with capital letters is in the hands of God, and that assurance is the source of our own peace. Ultimately, we do not have to fear this little future or that one, this little dictator or that one, this overreaching president or another, for in the end they will all crumble into forgetfulness, like sand in our hands.

But we, the church, also need to be corrected in our own overreaching. Too often we also overreach, claiming what is not ours as if it were. Let me give you a simple example. Some of us have repeatedly been told, or we ourselves have said, that we are building the kingdom of God. Nonsense! The kingdom of God is too high a thing for us to build. Furthermore, quite often, when Christians have set out to build the Kingdom of God, they have built theocracies and oligarchies that have been more like the kingdom of Hell than like the Kingdom of God. But even in the milder cases, when we say that in helping the poor, or in liberating the captive, or in struggling for justice, we are building the Kingdom of God, that too is nonsense. Our task is not

to build the Kingdom of God. Our task is to be true citizens of the Kingdom of God. (Not just then, but now!)

What I see clearly in Scripture is not that we are to bring about the Kingdom, but rather that we are to believe, and behave, as citizens of the Kingdom. Look at Paul. He had dual civil citizenship, for he was both a citizen of Tarsus and a Roman citizen. His Roman citizenship was the most valued and most desirable citizenship of his time. It was as valuable as was an American diplomatic passport when I was growing up. And yet, writing to the Philippians, he tells them:

But our citizenship is in heaven, and it is from there that we are expecting a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. He will transform the body of our humiliation that it may be conformed to the body of his glory, by the power that also enables him to make all things subject to himself. Therefore, my brothers and sisters, whom I love and long for, my joy and crown, stand firm in the Lord in this way, my beloved. (Phil 3.20—4.1)

And stand firm he did, when his heavenly citizenship led him to resist all calls to change his way and cease his proclamation of the gospel. In the end, his valuable Roman citizenship only granted him the mercy of being beheaded instead of suffering a more painful death. Why was he ready to die? Simply because, far above his very desirable Roman citizenship, he cherished and obeyed the demands of his heavenly citizenship. For a citizen of the Kingdom, the call is not to build the Kingdom, but to live it, to proclaim it, to show it; to show that there is a citizenship more valuable and more desirable than any earthly citizenship.

The rulers of this world may deport and even “depart” us; but they cannot deport us from the Kingdom of God!

In Scripture, we have many images of the Kingdom. Obviously, since the Bible is addressed to us, it does not seek to describe what is to us indescribable. But it does offer us multiple images that point to it.

One of the most compelling among such images of the kingdom appears in the book of Micah, chapter 4:

*He [God] shall judge between many peoples,
and shall arbitrate between strong nations far away;
they shall beat their swords into plowshares,
and their spears into pruning hooks;
nation shall not lift up sword against nation,
neither shall they learn war any more;
but they shall all sit under their own vines and under their own fig trees,
and no one shall make them afraid;
for the mouth of the Lord of hosts has spoken. (Mi 4.3-4)*

This is THE future, not just of the church, but of all creation. This is the future to which all creation moves. This is the future to which we all move, no matter whether they know it or not. This is the future to which galaxies speed at an incomprehensible speed. This is the final cause of all creation.

It is a future in which God will reign, and arbitrate among nations near and far, so that they will beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks. (Today we would say,

their armored tanks into tractors and their chemical weapons into fertilizer.) In other words, a kingdom of peace—of a peace so profound that we cannot even imagine it. A kingdom of economic justice, in which “they shall all sit under their own vines and under their own fig trees.” (A few years ago, we would have said, “enough to make a decent living”). A kingdom of security, in which no one shall make them afraid. (Today we would say, “no one will fear ICE.”) In a word, a kingdom of love, of love incarnate in peace, of love incarnate in justice, of love incarnate in safety.

This is the Kingdom of which we are already citizens. Paul does not say that he and the Philippians aspire to be citizens of the Kingdom. No. He says, “our citizenship is in heaven.” We do not aspire to this heavenly citizenship. We are already citizens. The question is whether we reflect it or not.

That Kingdom is not just our future, but a future of such significance that it must be manifested in our lives today.

I said earlier that the futures different futurologists see depend on the past each takes as a model. The Bible tells its story, and promises its future, on the basis of several pasts that build on one another. In the beginning God calls creation into existence. Creation does not make itself. It is God who says, “let there be,” and, because God says it, there is! Then, when the children of Israel are slaves in Egypt, God calls them into freedom by opening a path through

the sea. God does not do this primarily because of who the Hebrews are, but because of who God is. Still later, when they are exiles in Babylon, God opens a highway through the desert. Again, not because of who they are, but because of who God is. Then we come to the darkest moment in human history, the moment when God incarnate, that glorious union of humanity and divinity, lay dead in a borrowed tomb. On a hill nearby, his dried blood was still on a cross. The skies were dark. The men and women who had followed him from Galilee were at a loss, disappointed and abandoned. And—what was worse—nobody seemed to care. Right there, in Jerusalem, most people celebrated the Passover and rejoiced in it as they had always done. The Romans had crucified three more Jews. There was nothing new about that. The Romans had done it before and would do it again. You just can't stop them. Life goes on. . . The world goes on. . .

And then, on the third day. . . on the third day, very quietly, without any fanfare, with no parades, no red carpets, and no press releases, while the guards slept, the stone was rolled away. The voice that had called all creation into being had spoken again. The power that had moved the waters of the Red Sea had now moved the stone. The hand that had built a roadway through the desert for the exiles to return home now had returned Jesus to his disciples. And death lost its sting. And, through the power of the Spirit, the disciples lost their fear. And, like their Master, they found that in their very weakness was their power, That, even against the opinion of all the futurologists in the world, victory is not attained through power but through

love; through a love that implies vulnerability; through a love that is willing to take the cross in defense of the vulnerable.

If the future we foresee is determined by the past we see as our paradigm, God invites us to see THE future—the absolute, final, inevitable and unconquerable future—in the light of this painful but glorious past: the life, the teachings, the example, the sufferings, the death, and the resurrection of our Lord.

May God lead us along this path!

