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PASTORAL LETTER

*To be read in all churches and chapels of the Archdiocese of Liverpool on
LAMP Sunday, 1 November 2009, the Solemnity of All Saints.*

My dear People,

Thirty years ago this week in a pastoral letter Archbishop Worlock wrote: 'Please help to make this LAMP Sunday a day to remember in the history of the Archdiocese, a day when we try to forget our own needs and take our share in the missionary work of the Church. And may the Lord bring the strength of his love to those in Latin America for whom our priests are caring in his name.' So LAMP, the Liverpool Archdiocesan Missionary Project, began. One young man listening that day was Joe Bibby. He is now keeping the LAMP flame alight in Bolivia, high in the Andes. Thirty years of fidelity to sisters and brothers far way lives on through Joe, through Denis Parry, now in the Parish of Our Lady of Guadeloupe in the Northern Zone of Lima and Simon Cadwallader in Villa el Salvador, to the South of Lima, Peru. Your generosity also enabled Doctor Jonathan Berry of Penketh to add languages to his medical skills so that now he is serving as a doctor in Bolivia. And surely it is a fitting moment to keep in mind Archbishop Paul Gallagher now serving as the Nuncio in Guatemala.

This year this letter must above all be thanks. And first thanks to accompany my prayer at his tomb whenever I am at the Cathedral for Archbishop Derek Worlock. Reading his diary of his visit to Latin America thirty years ago brought home to me for the first time the sheer physical courage of this great man. He writes, for example: 'The plane had webbing seats along each side, with maximum capacity for 30 passengers. There were 63 persons aboard plus luggage down the middle, several babies and a chicken or two.' And again: 'Tomorrow we are to visit a village some miles away, cut off by landslide, so there is talk of horses. But just now my thoughts are of cockroaches which have reached my bed and my suitcases and of the overflowing WC from which the water is now spreading across the floor.'

The next thanks: thank you for your generosity, second to none in this country, year by year to CAFOD and the red boxes for the Missions: pushing towards a million pounds each year.

Thank you, then, for your growing generous commitment to our sisters and brothers, the living stones of whom are formed the church in the Holy Land. Thank you to so many for going there as pilgrims. A sign of how much this means to them there is that the Latin Patriarch, of Jerusalem, His Beatitude Archbishop Fwad Twal will be coming to celebrate Mass in the Cathedral at 11.00 am and again at 3.00 pm two weeks today, Sunday 15 November.

And in the midst of all this, that never wavers, thirty years of consistent, affectionate commitment to LAMP by priests and people.

In all of this you make flesh in our day the word of God proclaimed on All Saints Day: people from every nation, race, tribe, language bound together as the children of God, in fidelity to the Lamb of God.

And from Latin America our priests have come back to bless us because they themselves have been blest by those who are the poor in spirit, gentle, hungry and thirsty for justice, peacemakers and, yes those who are persecuted in the cause of right.

In this 30th anniversary year be generous once more in prayer and giving.

The last word must be from Archbishop Derek's diary for that visit: 'So up and away, Quito, Panama City, New York, Prestwick, Manchester...John (Furnival's) head is on his shoulder. Michael (Casey's) is slumped on his chest. My head is thick, my legs wobbly, my bronchs feel chewed. But my heart is high. Now this diary can finish. Mission accomplished. LAMP is lit. Deo Gratias.

Yours devotedly in Christ,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Patrick Kelly". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Archbishop of Liverpool

**Ends
1 November 2009**