

THE LATIN AMERICAN CHURCH

Penny Lernoux

Few events in Latin America have attracted so many journalists as Pope John Paul's visit to Mexico in January 1979. Few have been so poorly reported.

The contradiction is a reflection of coverage of Latin America in general: of the more than one thousand reporters present in Mexico, only a handful, mostly from the Catholic press, had a background in both religious affairs and Latin America. The vast majority did not speak Spanish, knew nothing about Latin America's Catholic Church, and had only a rudimentary understanding of Vatican affairs, which are Byzantinely complex even for the initiated; "color," therefore, substituted for in-depth reporting. But then journalists are not the only ones ignorant of the Latin American Church. When the Senate Foreign Relations Committee questioned intelligence representatives on the National Security Council about Catholic leaders in Latin America, in regard to the United States' "unpreparedness" for the religious upheaval in Iran, they reportedly could not name a single one.

Yet of all the institutions in Latin America, and arguably in world Catholicism, this Church bears closest watching. Unlike the military or the region's dominant economic interests, the Church is in political flux, frequently taking the side of the poor and oppressed—and paying for such commitment with an unprecedented number of martyrs. (Between 1968 and 1978, over 850 bishops, priests, and nuns were threatened, arrested, tortured, exiled, or murdered.)¹ In several military regimes, it "is the only surviving pressure group that can speak for the many voices silenced," as Borrat notes. "Its messages therefore constitute an exceptional opportunity for dissent; the demands that the Church speak up, and speak strongly, have increased more than ever." Thanks to such pressures, traditionally obscurantist language has been replaced by detailed denunciations, including names, dates, and places.² Some of the best economic and social criticism in these countries is now published by Catholic newspapers and magazines.

But more threatening to the established order is the creative educational work of Church groups, using popular religion to attack the fatalism inherent in Latin American poverty. Unlike the industrialized world, where religion has succumbed to materialism and a flexible social structure, Latin America is still profoundly influenced by Catholicism (90 percent of the people are baptized Catholics). Farming traditions, health, education, social mores, politics are all imbued with religious folklore. While traditionally fatalistic, popular religion need not be so. Says Hoornaert: "Today everyone recognizes that in certain circumstances religion can be an opium but that under others it can foment development: Everything depends on how the message is delivered." The new message of "liberation," temporal as well as spiritual, is transmitted through

experimental forms of communal worship that share striking similarities with the primitive Christian communities of the pre-Constantine, missionary Church, unfettered by power and riches. Underpinning this movement is the controversial theology of liberation, which ranks with Latin America's recent literature as an original contribution from the Third World, so much so that John Paul is now talking of the need for a "universal theology of liberation."

Even if only by weight of numbers, the region's Church is important: Latin Americans will comprise over half the world's Catholics by the end of the century. By far the largest number will live in Brazil, which also happens to have Latin America's most socially activist hierarchy and some of its foremost religious innovators. Pope John Paul will see this "Church of the People" in action when he visits Brazil in July 1980, for a tour of the country's slums and villages in what Dom Ivo Lorscheiter, president of the Brazilian Bishops' Conference, describes as "a good look at the thorns as well as the flowers."

If so little attention has been paid to the Latin American Church by journalists, academics, and businessmen, that may be because of its lingering image as a politically reactionary, religiously intolerant institution. The stereotypes still exist, of course, particularly in the current leadership of the Latin American Episcopal Conference (CELAM), but even in such notoriously conservative churches as those in Colombia and Mexico, considerable ferment is occurring at the parish level. Rarely does this filter through, however, unless there is an outright confrontation between Church and State, as in the case of Archbishop Oscar Romero's opposition to El Salvador's military government. Social activism still tends to be interpreted, at least by some journalists, as a variation on the Camilo Torres theme, although the Colombian priest's espousal of guerrilla tactics never had much support among Latin America's clergy. Alternately, the pro-Allende Christians for Socialism movement is invoked, despite its virtual demise in Latin America for political and religious reasons: most of today's socially activist clerics and religious have moved to a new stage of awareness in nonpartisan commitment to the poor. As in Mexico, where nineteenth-century language frequently obscured the Pope's speeches, the lack of hard data on such a diverse, rapidly changing institution has given rise to conflicting reports, or there is no information at all. The reluctance of bishops and priests to confide in outsiders, understandable in view of attempts by police agents to infiltrate the Church, has contributed to the information gap.

As Levine argues (pp. 74-75), any analysis of the Church must start with its own priorities, which are religious. The dilemma facing scholars and, to an even greater extent, those journalists covering a breaking story is that there is no set of commonly accepted religious priorities in Latin America. One is constantly coming up against conflicting theological opinions citing the same Papal encyclicals as support (there is a Biblical and Papal source for every political hue). Moreover, the religious priorities of the most dynamic sector in the Church, who follow the theology of liberation, cannot be interpreted in the traditional religious sense because they are also temporal (e.g., the construction of a village school is more important than building a church). "Liberation theology is new in our time because its object is the transformation of society rather than purifying

and forming the faith for the Church," explains C. Ellis Nelson of the Union Theological Seminary (Scharper 1973). "Its task is to analyze and criticize the role of the Church in order to help the Church use its institutional power to change society." Because society is the object, everything in theology is turned upside down. Says Nelson: "One does not start with God, one starts with man. One does not seek truth and apply it to man's condition. One does not take the past and find a lesson for the present, one takes the future. One does not ask: 'What must I do to get to heaven?' but 'How can I find fulfillment of my life here on earth?' Humanity, according to liberation theology, is the temple of God." But it is most concerned with a particular type of temple—"the wretched of the earth."

In such a concept, religious piety is expressed in service and commitment to the poor. Naturally, more orthodox Catholics do not understand this; for them, a priest defending a squatter community is a political and probably "subversive" influence. This attitude is shared by approximately 20 percent of the hierarchy, who fear the public arena, preferring the safety of traditional sanctuaries.³

For the North American and European observers, these religious/secular complexities are compounded by their own experience of a different religious structure in which theology, and its many academic offshoots, is treated as something quite apart from the everyday functioning of the local churches, "manufactured in the great intellectual centers and then distributed to local outlets almost as if it were a Sears Roebuck product," as Harvard theologian Harvey Cox puts it. In contrast, theology in Latin America has become an integral part of neighborhood life, particularly in the phenomenally successful *comunidades de base*, or Christian grassroots communities. The bishops' socially critical pastoral letters reflect this integration. In Brazil, for example, they are "record of a Church doing theology out in the open and on the run, of a Church preaching and teaching and prophesying in the most effective way possible," as Quigley says. "The words do not substitute for action; they derive from action, reflect on action, and stimulate further action." This is not the sort of theology North Americans are exposed to, if they are exposed at all, and perhaps this is one reason why the questions asked, by scholars as well as journalists, tend to emphasize social and political action rather than religious concepts and issues.

For students of Church history, a solid body of work already exists (see, for example, Levine 1979), but because religious perceptions are changing so rapidly in Latin America, assumptions that seemed valid as recently as the early '70s do not necessarily apply today. Examples in point: clerical and religious withdrawal from partisan politics and a renewed commitment to work and fight for change within the institution itself, instead of dropping out as so many priests and nuns previously did. Almost no empirical data is available on such recent developments as *comunidades de base*, popular religiosity as an educational tool, or the social commitment of priests and nuns, although they will have significant impact on the future direction of the Church and society.

With such a paucity of proven data, and so many conflicting opinions, there has been a tendency to generalize (journalists) or overspecialize (academ-

ics) in some small area of a national church without comparative studies of churches in other countries, although such analysis is vital given the ongoing cross-fertilization of methods and ideas. One alternative that provides both the broad strokes and the detail is to study, and compare, the Catholic periodicals available in Latin America, which form an information network for every major development in the Church today. While the theological opinions expressed do not necessarily reflect a majority viewpoint, they signal trends, and there is no other comparable source for a month-by-month documentation of Church-State conflicts, hierarchical disputes, significant Church documents, and regional meetings, such as the bishops' third hemisphere conference in Puebla, Mexico.

The quality of the some three dozen magazines and newspapers varies, according to country and religious orientation. Among the best are the Jesuit magazines published monthly in various Latin American countries, in response to the order's worldwide mandate to investigate and publicize socially significant issues. *Mensaje* in Chile is the most scholarly of the group, featuring analytical pieces on Chile and Latin America, in addition to lively theological debates. The Venezuelan Jesuits' *SIC* magazine is a good source for important Church documents and analysis on Venezuela; Panama's *Diálogo Social*, while marred by grotesque cartoons, publishes some excellent historical pieces on Central America, particularly the rural labor movements. Like most of the country's publications, the Argentine Jesuits' magazine, *Revista del Centro de Investigación y Acción Social*, has lost its earlier sting, preferring to treat such safe subjects as Papal encyclicals and Church history. Until recently, Uruguay had no critical voice, but this has changed with the renewed publication of *Marcha*, in Mexico City, including contributions from exiled Uruguayan churchmen. Paraguay's outspoken bishops publish the Asunción newspaper *Sendero*, which has defended human rights for more than a decade. Its Chilean counterpart, *Solidaridad*, put out by the Santiago archdiocese's Vicariate of Solidarity, is a more recent arrival, slickly presented with useful articles on the status of human rights in Chile and periodic conflicts between bishops and generals.

But undoubtedly Brazil's is the liveliest Catholic press, including newspapers, magazines, and the Editora Vozes publishing house in Petrópolis, which produces the bishops' documentation service, *SEDOC*, as well as books by the country's foremost theologians on such subjects as comunidades de base, Christology, and liberation theology. Unlike other Latin American countries, there is no theological polemic within the Brazilian Church, which has been united by external repression, and this is reflected in the audacity of the Catholic publications. *Cadernos do CEAS*, in Salvador, rivals *Mensaje* for its serious studies on such wide-ranging topics as multinational investments, torture, and the militant mothers' clubs in São Paulo. Rio's CERIS specializes in statistical work and sociological studies. *Clamor*, published in São Paulo, is a forum for human rights advocates in the Southern Cone, with detailed descriptions of military repression; it serves as a surrogate for such organizations as the "Families of Disappeared Argentines Detained for Political Reasons," which are forced to send out their bulletins clandestinely. *O São Paulo*, the crusading newspaper of Cardinal Paulo Evaristo Arns, is generally regarded as the most important Catholic publi-

cation in Brazil and undoubtedly has the largest circulation. The paper has frequently outraged the military authorities, and it was one of the last to be released from government censorship. Written in the simple language of workers and peasants—all bishops are referred to by their first names—the paper is deeply involved in the causes of the poor, including the right to independent labor unions, the defense of rural squatters and Indians, and the denunciation of torture. It also is a weathervane for the growth of popular mass movements and a guide to developments within the Brazilian Church, such as the campaign for a full amnesty for political prisoners.

Elsewhere in South America, Peru is notable for the ecumenical news service *Noticias Aliadas*, which also puts out a weekly English translation called *Latinamerica Press*. Decidedly progressive, the service is probably the best news summary of events in Latin American Catholicism and Protestantism now available, including translations of significant pastoral letters. MIEC-JECI, also located in Lima, reproduces Church documents and has compiled a 320-page history of recent persecution of Catholic leaders. Although Colombia does not produce publications of the quality of Chile or Brazil, Bogotá is the headquarters for both CELAM and the Latin American Confederation of Religious (CLAR). Their monthly bulletins are essential for students of the Church, not because they necessarily say anything important but because of the trends that can be observed by reading between the lines, such as the conflict between the socially activist CLAR and CELAM's conservative president, Colombian Archbishop Alfonso López Trujillo. Since most of the region's Catholic publications are progressive, *Tierra Nueva*, edited in Bogotá by the Belgian Jesuit Roger Veke-mans, provides a useful balance, with an orthodox theological line and a political slant towards Frei's brand of Christian Democracy. *Medellin*, a similarly oriented magazine produced by CELAM's Department of Theology and Pastoral Work, is a densely written publication—so dense, in fact, that hardly anyone reads it. At the opposite end of the spectrum, Bogotá's Indo America Press publishes a wide selection of progressive works, usually with a popular pastoral basis. Bogotá also is the headquarters of the secretariat of CEHILA, an ambitious, ecumenical project to write the history of the churches in the Western Hemisphere.

Mexico boasts a variety of Catholic publications, the most serious, and controversial, being *Christus*, sponsored by the Theological Reflection Center. While not in the same intellectual class, *Contacto* and *Cencos* provide information on conflicts at the parish level and a summary, in the style of *Clamor*, of human rights violations. The Jesuits maintain a documentation center in the Dominican Republic. *Caribbean Contact*, in Barbados, offers the best coverage of the area's English-speaking churches, Protestant and Catholic.

There is an informal trade-off of articles among the magazines and thus a certain amount of repetition, but because of the diversity of the churches, it is impossible to keep up with national developments without the local publications. A clearing house was discussed at the first regional meeting of Catholic editors, held in Mexico at the beginning of 1979, as well as a Latin American theological review and a bibliography magazine, but they are still in the talking stage, since there is no money to finance them. While it is generally accepted

that existing publications should serve as a sounding board for the impoverished people, as does *O São Paulo*, most are still written by and for academics.

Among the most important foreign sources on the Latin American Church is the U.S. Catholic Conference's *Latin America Documentation* in Washington, which translates documents, pastoral letters, and articles. The *National Catholic News Service*, *National Catholic Reporter*, *St. Anthony Messenger*, *Cross Currents*, and *Maryknoll* occasionally publish pieces on the region's Church. For books, the recognized leader is Maryknoll's Orbis Books, which introduced the theology of liberation to U.S. readers. Orbis published the only English translation of the Puebla document in *Puebla and Beyond* (Oct. 1979), including commentaries by Brazilian theologian Jon Sobrino, Panama's Archbishop Marcos McGrath, the Protestant religious critic Rober McAfee Brown, and this writer. (For a recent history of change in and persecution of the Latin American Church, see Lernoux 1980.) In Canada the principal source of information on Latin American religious affairs is Toronto's *Latin America and Caribbean Inside Report*.

European sources include France's *Informations Catholiques Internationales*, which occasionally carries sensational revelations about the politics of the Latin American hierarchy, and DIAL, a clearing house for Latin American Church news run by the prestigious religious writer Charles Antoine. The Latin American Bureau in London compiles information on religious and social persecution, particularly in Central America. Brussel's *Pro Mundi Vita* turns out scholarly studies on such subjects as popular religiosity in Central America; the International Documentation and Communications Centre (IDOC), in Rome, a variety of publications in Spanish, English, French, German, and Italian, some well-researched, others left-wing rhetoric. Like the CLAR and CELAM bulletins, the annual reports of *Adveniat* and *Misereor* in West Germany are important for their contribution to the larger picture, specifically the financial structure of the Latin American Church and which political current is getting what. (The West German Church is the largest source of foreign funding for the Latin American bishops.)

What is one to make of this welter of information? In certain areas, very little. Personal observation has convinced me of the success of the comunidades de base in Northeastern Brazil, both as a religious and social experiment. But for all the literature on the subject, no one can state with certainty that there are 110,000 comunidades in Latin America, as a Mexico-based federation claims, or that all are as socially activist as those in Brazil's rural Northeast. Similarly, much has been written about popular religiosity and a popular theology emerging from the poor, but local experiments, as in Chile and Brazil, do not provide sufficient basis to generalize. What does come through, both in the region's publications and the actions of countless priests, nuns, and bishops, is a recognition that the Church shares responsibility for the lack of moral/religious values in Latin America and that both society's evolution and the survival of the Church, institutional or otherwise, depend on change. Deep divisions exist over theological, economic, and political alternatives, yet there is growing accord over the need to defend human rights and to make a commitment, physical as well as spiritual, to the poor, who comprise the majority. Even in Colombia,

supposedly the heartland of Catholic conservatism, no less than seven archbishops joined a human rights forum in March 1979, to protest military repression. As often happens in Latin America, such criticism evoked sharp complaints from government adherents, who charged the bishops with political interference. (Justice Minister Hugo Escobar Sierra went so far as to claim that the hierarchy was "promoting extremist groups.") But as Eduardo Uribe, vice-provincial of the Colombia Jesuits, explained, in response to government persecution of the order, including the detention of two Jesuits: "Many people do not understand that the Church's so-called interference in politics is really a commitment to social justice inspired by the Gospel message." This is *la gran política* so frequently mentioned by the bishops at Puebla, not an ideological or partisan commitment, and it is what the Bible is all about, say the continent's liberation theologians.⁴ One of the most popular editions, *La Nueva Biblia Latinoamérica*, published by Ediciones Paulinas (Madrid, 1976), pounds home the theme: If the God of the Bible took sides back then, supporting the poor and challenging their oppressors, it is clear that He continues to take sides today. In a society where religion historically bolstered the structures of power by preaching patience and suffering to the poor, in the promise of a better hereafter, such material is revolutionary. Not surprisingly, the military regimes think the whole idea subversive.

No means have yet been found to measure the speed of the awakening, or its long-term impact, although one indicator is provided by the sharp rise in church attendance and religious vocations in areas with socially activist bishops and priests. CLAR representatives speak of a work of two generations or more, and much can happen in the meantime. But there is no doubt that a major evangelical movement is afoot, providing new insights into the reality of Latin American poverty and its religious-social symbols. Why, for example, is the Latin Americans' Christ traditionally the Christ of the Cross? Church studies in Brazil and elsewhere suggest that it is because the majority of the people never understood the Resurrection and its message of hope. For them, Christ had been beaten down, tortured, and killed by a higher authority, just as they had been and their fathers before them. In Brazil, for example, there are any number of legends about how Christ had to call for help from more powerful spirits, and in some areas "to put up with Christ" means "to deal with an idiot."

The importance of the saints in the lives of the Latin American poor is in direct proportion to the diminished importance of Christ: they are needed to appease and bribe a distant God. While the saints and souls of the dead are as real to the people as their own neighbors, Church studies show that this narrow relationship induces an acceptance of all things and events as inevitable, with heavy emphasis on tradition.⁵ But when the message is reversed, as in the *Nueva Biblia*, magic and spiritual bribery can be replaced by the conviction that the people are "co-creators with God." "This brings forth protest, not against destiny, but against injustice that is not consecrated by destiny and is therefore vincible," explains Chilean theologian Antonio Bentue. "Protest leads to the conviction that the future can be better, and thus places more emphasis on the future and change than on the traditional past." What church groups are basi-

cally saying, says Bonino, is that many of the gestures, devotions, and symbols of popular religiosity have been substitutes, through magic or providence, for human initiative and action. "When the structural relation between capitalism and unemployment or the social causes of infant mortality are discovered, the relation changes between the believer and the saint whom he was beseeching for work or health. Basically it is a question of a new kind of faith, not mere growth."

The Latin Americans' new faith emphasizes solidarity and equality (in a *comunidad de base* it is more important to be a brother than a boss.) It also stresses dialogue with respect, with the result that increasing numbers of bishops and priests are listening instead of commanding, service, not rank, being the principal goal. These latter are still a minority, perhaps 40 percent of the Latin American Church at most, but they comprise the institution's most dynamic leaders and virtually all its intellectual strength.

There is an old joke in South America about how God offset His excessive generosity in natural resources with poor material in human ones. Be that as it may, many of His representatives in Latin America are now disposed to make amends, not at the top, as was their wont, but at the bottom, where it may count.

APPENDIX

Addresses of Publications and Organizations

Adveniat, Bernestrasse 5, Kolpinghaus, 43 Essen
Cadernos do CEAS, Rua Aristides Novis 101 (federação), 40.000 Salvador, Bahia
Caribbean Contact, P.O. Box 616, George Street and Bannister Land, Lower Collemore Rock, Barbados
CEHILA, Apartado Aereo 20439, Bogotá
CELAM, Apartado Aereo 51086, Bogotá
Cencos, Apartado Postal 74-307, México, D.F.
CERIS, Rua Dr. Julio Ottoni 571, Santa Tereza, Rio de Janeiro
Christus, Apartado Postal 19-213, México 19, D.F.
Clamor, Av. Higienópolis 890, 02138 São Paulo
CLAR, Apartado Aereo 90710, Bogotá
Contacto, Apartado Postal 85-022, México 20, D.F.
Cross Currents, 103 Van Houten Fields, West Nyack, NY 10994
Cuadernos de Marcha, Apartado Postal 19-131, México 19, D.F.
DIAL, 170, Bd. du Montparnasse, Paris 14
Diálogo Social, Apartado 6-133, El Dorado, Panama
Editora Vozes (SEDOC), Rua Frei Luis 100, 25600 Petrópolis, RJ
Indo America Press, Apartado 53274, Chapinero, Bogotá
Informations Catholiques Internationales, 163, Bd. Malesherbes, 75849 Paris
International Documentation and Communications Centre (IDOC), Via S. Maria dell' Anima, 30, 00186 Roma
Latin American Bureau, P.O. Box 134, London NW1 4JY
Latin America Documentation, 1312 Massachusetts Ave. N.W., Washington, DC 20005
Latin America and Caribbean Inside Report, Box 2207, Station P, Toronto, Ontario, Canada M5S 2T2
Maryknoll, Maryknoll, NY 10545
Medellín, Apartado Aereo 1931, Medellín

Mensaje, Casilla 10445, Santiago
 MIEC-JECI, Apartado 3564, Lima 100
 Misereor, Mozartstrasse 9–11, 51 Aachen
 National Catholic News Service, 1312 Massachusetts Ave. N.W., Washington, DC 20005
 National Catholic Reporter, P.O. Box 281, Kansas City, MO 64141
 Noticias Aliadas (Latinamérica Press), Apartado 5594, Lima 1
 Orbis Books, Maryknoll, NY 10545
 O São Paulo, Av. Higienópolis 890, 02138 São Paulo
 Pro Mundi Vita, 6, Rue de la Limite, 1030 Bruxelles
 Revista del Centro de Investigación y Acción Social, O'Higgins 1331, Buenos Aires
 Sendero, Casilla de Correo 1436, Asunción
 SIC, Apartado 40.225, Caracas
 Solidaridad, Plaza de Armas 444, Santiago
 St. Anthony Messenger, 1615 Republic St., Cincinnati, OH 45210
 Tierra Nueva, Apartado Aereo 20134, Bogota

NOTES

1. A number of sources are available on the Church's recent martyrs. Among the most important is a survey prepared by the Paris-based Diffusion de l'Information sur l'Amérique Latine (DIAL), a Church-related agency directed by Charles Antoine, a well-known writer on Latin American religious affairs. Also useful are *Padecerán persecución por mi causa*, a ten-year study of Church-State conflicts in Latin America prepared by MIEC-JECI (Lima, Oct. 1978); and *Repression against the Church in Brazil (1968–1978)*, a summary in English compiled by the Centro Ecueménico de Documentação e Informação (CEDI) in Rio. The figure of 850 is of necessity a partial list of ecclesiastical martyrs, and does not include lay leaders, such as heads of comunidades de base. Because of censorship and poor communications in rural areas, detailed information is not available on the many people threatened, arrested, tortured, kidnapped, exiled, or murdered during a time of rising repression.
2. Space does not permit a listing of such documents, which include the pastoral letters of bishops' national conferences and regional conferences. A few examples: *Between the Persecutions of the World and the Consolation of God* (1976), Paraguayan Bishops' Conference; *Communication to the People of God* (1976) and *Christian Requirements of a Political Order* (1977), Brazilian Bishops' Conference; and *The Situation in the Country at the Present Time* (1977), Bishops' Conference of El Salvador.
3. The figure of 20 percent is an estimate based on surveys by such organizations as Noticias Aliadas and voting patterns at such meetings as the Puebla Conference. On specific issues, such as Church support for labor unions, it probably goes higher, to 30 or even 40 percent. But it is generally accepted that only a fifth of the hierarchy would consider such social work politically subversive. This minority includes a fringe group of bishops who support the extreme right-wing Tradition, Family and Property movement.
4. The classic work on this subject is Gustavo Gutiérrez's *A Theology of Liberation* (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1973). See also Dumas Benoit, *Los dos rostros alienados de la iglesia uno* (Buenos Aires: Latinamerica Libros, 1971); José Comblin, *Jesús de Nazaret* (Petrópolis: Editoria Vozes, 1974); Juan Luis Segundo, *A Theology for Artisans of a New Humanity*, 5 vols. (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1974); Leonardo Boff, *Los sacramentos de la vida y la vida de los sacramentos* (Bogotá: Indo-America Press, 1975); and José Miranda, *Marx and the Bible* (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1974).
5. There is a large body of literature on popular religiosity in Latin America, usually on a country-by-country basis. In Brazil, for example, considerable work has been done on the Afro-Brazilian cults (see, for example, *Macumba* [São Paulo: Edições Paulinas, 1976] and *O Segredo da Macumba* by Marco Aurélio Luz and Georges Lapassade [Rio: Paz e Terra, 1972]). Though somewhat dated, Felipe Berryman provides a good gen-

eral introduction in "Popular Catholicism in Latin America," *Cross Currents* (Summer 1971), pp. 284–301. *Basic Christian Communities*, one of the Keyhole series published by *Latin America Documentation* (1976), offers some interesting comments on how popular religiosity can be used as an educational tool. Its political potential is discussed by Lernoux, "New Wind in Latin America," *The Nation* (19 Feb. 1977), pp. 199–205.

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