

ANTILLES DELEGATION OFF TO ROME OCTOBER 7, 2004

Leela Ramdeen, Episcopal Delegate for Social Justice/Chair of the Catholic Commission for Social Justice, will join Archbishop Kelvin Felix, President of the Commission for Social Action, Justice and Peace, Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Antilles at the "First World Congress of Ecclesial Organizations Working for Justice and Peace" which will be held in Rome from 27th - 30th October 2004.

The World Congress, which has as its theme: "Announcing the Gospel of Justice and of Peace", is being organized by His Eminence, Cardinal Renato R. Martino, President of the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace.

It is envisaged that 2 persons, or a maximum of 3, would participate from each Episcopal Conference and Episcopal Regional Conference. Presentations/Round Table discussions at the Congress include the following themes:

1. The Commitment of the Church to Justice and Peace.
2. Pastoral Commitment of the Church in Africa, Europe, America, Asia, Oceania.
3. Justice in a time of Globalization.
4. The Defence and Promotion of Human Rights.
5. Social Doctrine of the Church as an Instrument of Evangelization.
6. The Ecclesial Identity of Organizations that Work for Justice and Peace.
7. Relationship between the Pontifical Council and Ecclesial Organizations engaged in Justice and Peace.

Miss Ramdeen says: "I thank God for this opportunity. We have a collective responsibility to promote Justice and Peace and must commit ourselves to take up Pope Paul VI's challenge: "If you want peace, work for justice."

"It is good for our Church to create an international forum such as this to facilitate dialogue, listening and learning from what we, the followers of Christ, are doing around the world to build communities where peace is built with justice and justice is guided by love, love of God and love of neighbour.

"Injustices, which are many and varied, still disfigure our age and Catholics are called to be beacons of the Church's pastoral, prophetic and priestly concern for justice and peace. We are called to give genuine and authentic witness to Christ by the quality of our daily lives. How are we fulfilling the mandate in Luke 4: to bring good news to the poor, liberty to captives, sight to the blind, and to set the oppressed free?"

"This Congress gives us an opportunity to express our endeavours to promote justice and peace in the Caribbean and elsewhere. I have known Archbishop Felix for many years - since I worked voluntarily with Cardinal Hume in the UK. It is an honour to have been asked by him to accompany him to this Congress in Rome.

"Please pray for us and for the success of the Congress."