



FAITH AND CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS

("DON'T LET THEM TEAR DOWN THAT STATUE")



"For we have the record of not a few brave and experienced men, both before and after Christopher Columbus, who with stubbornness and zeal explored unknown lands and seas yet more unknown. And the memory of these, man, mindful of benefits, rightly holds, and will hold in honour; because they advanced the ends of knowledge and humanity, and increased the common prosperity of the race, not by light labour, but by supreme exertion, often accompanied by great dangers. But there is, nevertheless, between these and him of whom we speak, a generous difference. He was distinguished by this unique note, that in his work of traversing and retraversing immense tracts of ocean, he looked for a something greater and higher than did these others. We say not that he was unmoved by perfectly honourable aspirations after knowledge, and deserving well of human society; nor did he despise glory, which is a most engrossing ideal to great souls; nor did he altogether scorn a hope of advantages to himself; but to him far before all these human considerations was the consideration of his ancient faith, which questionless dowered him with strength of mind and will,

and often strengthened and consoled him in the midst of the greatest difficulties. This view and aim is known to have possessed his mind above all; namely, to open a way for the Gospel over new lands and seas. ..."

... "And if (Christopher Columbus) moved Ferdinand and Isabella to decree that only Catholic Christians should be suffered to approach the New World and trade with the natives, he brought forward as reason, **"that he sought nothing from his enterprise and endeavour but the increase and glory of the Christian religion."** And this was well known to Isabella, who better than any had understood the great man's mind; indeed it is evident that it had been clearly laid before that most pious, masculine-minded, and great-souled woman. For she had declared of Columbus that he would boldly thrust himself upon the vast ocean, "to achieve a most signal thing, for the sake of the Divine glory." And to Columbus himself, on his second return, she writes: "That the expenses she had incurred, and was about to incur, for the Indian expeditions, had been well bestowed; for thence would ensure a spreading of Catholicism."

(For further reading please visit www.vatican.va/holy_father/leo_xiii/encyclicals/documents/hf_l-xiii_enc_16071892_quarto-abeunte-saeculo_en.html)

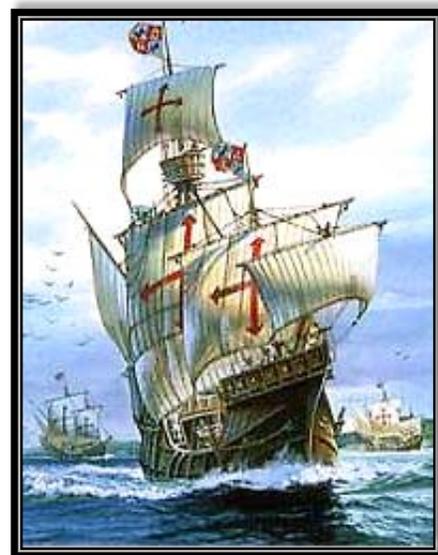
FOR THE EVANGELIZATION OF PEOPLES

COLLECT

O God, You have willed that Your Church,
be the Sacrament of Salvation for all nations,
so that Christ's saving work
may continue to the end of the ages;
stir up, we pray, the hearts of Your faithful
and grant that they may feel a more urgent call
to work for the Salvation of every creature,
so that from all the peoples on earth
one family and one people of Your own
may arise and increase.

Through our Lord Jesus Christ, Your Son,
Who lives and reigns with You
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever.

Amen.



THE SANTA MARIA