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MOTTO: Veritatem Facientes in Caritate - " Witnessing to Truth in Charity"

There are five elements that certainly speak about the Bishop and his ministry:

1. Image of the Good Shepherd:

This picture was taken from the catacombs of Rome and it signifies the goodness and the love of the shepherd for his sheep. The shepherd carries the lamb over his shoulders, meaning, like Jesus, the Bishop has to look out for those who are apart from God, those who are in danger, and those who are lost. The staff signifies guide and defense of the sheepfold. In the Gospels Jesus said, "I am the Good Shepherd" (John 10, 7-16), and He left this task to His Apostles and Disciples; the bishop and the priests.

2. Presence of Mother Mary:

We have the presence of Mother Mary, through the letters (logo) M-A. She is our guide and teacher, as well as the Mother of the Church. In life and in Christ's followers, Mary was the ever present concerned mother, like in the wedding of Cana in Galilee, when she asked her son for a miracle to change the water into wine so the feast could go on. She was there at the hour of the trial and at Jesus's death at the cross, she accepted us as her children also. In the pastoral responsibility of the Bishop, Mary occupies a very special place in the work of evangelization.

3. The Dividivi tree:

This tree represents something unique from the environment where the bishop will work. . This symbolizes the natural beauty of the islands of Antias and Aruba. There is also a spiritual meaning of this symbol. This tree has the ability to survive against the hot semi-arid climate of the region. It stays green all year round. The Naturally bent posture is caused by the normally one-direction strong wind, yet it never cracks or fall. This is what Catholic-Christian life should be; even if we experience many trials in life, our faith should stay alive strong and firm, we may "bent" but not fall and lost.

4. Starfishes on the shore:

They represent the six islands that form the Diocese of Willemstad's territory, named: Aruba, Bonaire, Curaçao, St. Maarten, St. Eustatius, and Saba.

5. The sky, the sea, and the beach:

These are the three natural elements which characterizes the beauty of the islands so much so that people from other nations come to enjoy these God-given gifts. The service that our people offer to these visitors become the source of income for families.

6. The Motto: "Veritatem Facientes in Caritate" - " Witnessing to Truth in Charity"

It is a life's program that challenges us all, starting with those whom God calls as guides; like the Bishop and the Clergy. We all have to pursue truth sincerely. Jesus Christ is the Truth. For us to achieve this, we have to walk in the way of love, with goodness and mercy in all life's situations. The Hat with the ropes that borders the emblem, expresses the mission of the Bishop; to give hope to the Christian Community which God entrusted to his fatherly care.

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The Diocese of Willemstad comprises the Dutch Caribbean territories of Aruba and The Netherlands Antilles (West Indies). The islands are: Aruba, Bonaire, and Curaçao, these ABC islands are on the southern part of the Caribbean and the SSS islands of St. Maartin, St. Eustatius, and Saba are part of the Leeward Islands on the north. On the bigger island of Curaçao, considered the capital of the Netherlands Antilles, is where the Bishop resides and consequently the Seat (Cathedral) of the Diocese. Curacensis was the latin name of the Prefecture Apostolic of Curaçao as it was erected in 1752. It became a Vicariate on 20 September 1842. This Diocese status was granted on 28 April 1958. The Metropolitan is the Archdiocese of Port of Spain (Trinidad).

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On the 28th of April 1958, Pope Pius XII elevated the Apostolic Vicariate of Curaçao to a diocese. It was those years; 1957 and 1958, when all the vicariates in the Caribbean became dioceses.

Monsignor Johannes Michael Holterman O.P. wrote in his statement of 28 June 1958: " Our Vicariate has become autonomous. The bishop, as a successor of the Apostles, who continue the task instituted by Christ himself, will do the same to accomplish his work with due authority under the primacy of the Pope of Rome. During those 116 years of existence, the Vicariate has developed in such a manner that it now possesses what is needed and worthy to be elevated as a Diocese". On a saturday, 18th of October, the Feast of St. Luke the Evangelist, Monsignor Holterman was installed as the first Bishop of Willemstad. It was noted that Mons. Holterman asked the permission from Rome to take the Church of Pietermaai (Punda) as the new Cathedral church instead of the pro-cathedral Sta. Ana. This Sta. Ana Church (Otrobanda) however, became a Basilica in 1975. Sunday, 19th of October, Monsignor Holterman celebrated his first Pontifical Mass at the new Catherdral of Pietermaai. On this same date at the Ref Stadium, with the presence of the catholic populace of Curaçao, was celebrated the Consecration of the new Diocese of Willemstad to MARY:"The Immaculate Conception"

Therefore, on the year of Our Lord 2008, the Diocese of Willemstad celebrated her fiftieth.[/vc_column_text][vc_column][vc_row][vc_row][vc_column][vc_text_separator title="MISSION AND VISION" title_align="separator_align_left" border_width="3"][/vc_column][vc_row][vc_row][vc_column width="1/2" css=".vc_custom_1441641122467{margin-top: -30px !important;}"][/vc_column_text]**Mission:**

Last October (16,17&18) 2008 was held the Diocesan Conference in Curacao. It was the next necessary step that must be taken to pursue the "Vision" of unity in Christ among the six-sister islands of the Diocese. After going through the process of inquiry, consultations, pre-conferences and lots of meetings, finally we came up with a working paper for the Conference which would become the final draft of the Diocesan Plan. The document after thorough examination and careful text-editing (so as not to change the essence of what was discussed and agreed upon) came out to be valuable guide for all pastors and pastoral cooperators in the parishes. It is our ardent hope and prayer that this paper: "Mission 2008-2011" will be the direction we as a diocese will pursue, with the "Wind" of the Holy Spirit pushing the sails of our effort in the mission of taking care of the least of Christ's brothers and sisters, and in doing so we too will become real disciples and missionaries of Him.[/vc_column_text][vc_column][vc_column width="1/2" css=".vc_custom_1441641225325{margin-top: -30px !important;}"][/vc_column_text]**Vision**

“We, who form the (Roman) Catholic Church of Antilles and Aruba, are a community of believers who want to make visible in our world and time, Jesus Christ, Who proclaimed the Good News to the poor, the oppressed and the afflicted, and brought joy and hope to a world that has lost its course. We want to live a life: that is dedicated to the construction of a civilization of love, in justice and solidarity; that is open to the involvement of all peoples within our community to work in mutual cooperation and communion; that allows growth of the knowledge of Christ and his message; and invites us to total conversion; and with the power of the Holy Spirit, makes us worthy to commit ourselves to a life of service, reflected in the FAITH we proclaim and celebrate. May Mother Mary, our intercessor and model, continue to guide us on the road leading us to accomplish our goal”. As part of the Jubilee celebration, a Diocesan Conference is scheduled on October 22-25, 2008. This will lay out a new pastoral plan, a renewed vision and mission of the Diocese!

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