

IN PLURIMIS: ON THE ABOLITION OF SLAVERY

Encyclical of Pope Leo XIII
5 May 1888

To Dominic: I recently rediscovered the above encyclical. It strongly condemns slavery.

It does not mention *Bartolomé de las Casas* by name. But the encyclical proves that Father Las Casas led a righteous crusade.

The full encyclical is available online at www.vatican.va: [HERE](#)

You can listen to the encyclical on the YouTube channel:

[Classic Catholic Audiobooks](#)

Video: Encyclical Letters of Pope Leo XIII (Audio Two Of Three): [HERE](#)

Start at the 1-hour plus 3-minute mark.

I can email you the above video if you wish.

Paul

EXCERPTS

Paragraph 2) We, indeed, to all men are the Vicar of Christ, the Son of God, who so loved the human race that not only did He not refuse, taking our nature to Himself, to live among men, but delighted in bearing the name of the Son of Man, openly proclaiming that He had come upon earth "to preach deliverance to the captives" in order that, rescuing mankind from the worst slavery, which is the slavery of sin, "he might re-establish all things that are in heaven and on earth," and so bring back all the children of Adam from the depths of the ruin of the common fall to their original dignity. . . .

Paragraph 3) In the presence of so much suffering, the condition of slavery, in which a considerable part of the great human family has been sunk in squalor and affliction now for many centuries, is deeply to be deplored; for the system is one which is wholly opposed to that which was originally ordained by God and by nature. The Supreme Author of all things so decreed that man should exercise a sort of royal dominion over beasts and cattle and fish and fowl, but never that men should exercise a like dominion over their fellow men. . . .

NOTES

In Paragraph 15, we read about the abuses of the Spanish and Portuguese encomienda systems.

In Paragraph 16, we read about the 15th and 16th Century popes who condemned the above abuses, and who began to remedy them.

Pope Paul III published the bull ***Sublimis Deus*** in 1537. It forbade the enslavement of the indigenous peoples of the Americas.

Two missionaries persuaded the pope to issue this bull:

- Archbishop Juan de Zumárraga (Mexico)
- Bartolomé de Las Casas (Protector of the Indians)

Anti-Slavery Campaigns – Role of Priests

Jeremiah was not just a prophet.

He was a descendant of Aaron. Consequently, Jeremiah was a priest (Cohen).

In addition, Jeremiah opposed forced servitude. He commanded all the Jews in or near Jerusalem to release their slaves (Jeremiah 34:8-9).

In the 16th Century, there were Catholic priests who condemned slavery in the Americas. (See blue box above).

As a result, there is an anti-slavery parallel between the Priest Jeremiah and the following Catholic priests:

- Pope Paul III
- Archbishop Juan de Zumárraga
- Bartolomé de Las Casas