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Intercultural center celebrates anniversary

by NCR Staff

The **Cuernavaca Center for Intercultural Dialog on Development** this month celebrates its 32nd anniversary serving North American Christians in connecting their faith with the struggle for social justice.



The center was founded by Catholic lay missionary Raymond E.

Plankey who responded to Pope John XXIII's call almost 50 years ago, in 1960, to create a special missionary effort for Latin America. This resulted in the Bishops' first nationally based lay missionary program entitled Papal Volunteers for Latin America.

Raymond is believed to be the longest standing papal volunteer remaining in continuous mission in Latin America.

In 1973, the then director of the Latin American Division of the Catholic Bishops asked Plankey to develop a special program of mission education about Latin America, something that other Latin

American bishops had requested of him. This was accomplished four years later in the founding of Cuernavaca center, which is the only non-U.S. based entity that is a member of the U.S. Catholic Mission Association.

The center provides a mission vision which all can practice back home. Plankey has directed the center most of its years but, while remaining president of the board, Dominican Sister Kathy Long succeeded him as director in 2005.

Plankey has traveled extensively within the U.S. spreading his message and recently wrote an autobiographical analysis of the U.S./Latin American relationship over the past fifty years while sharing his reflections of mission and life. Entitled, Questioning Myths of God and Country ? 50 Years: Memoirs of a Catholic Lay Missionary, it is available on the internet at link stores.lulu.com/plankey

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