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Nuncio tells bishops to be pastoral

by Thomas Reese

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Fall bishops' meeting 2013

Pope Francis' representative to the U.S. Church called on the American bishops to be pastoral witnesses not ideologues. He pointed to Pope Francis who "is giving us, by his own witness, an example of how to live a life attuned to the values of the Gospel."

In his talk to the bishops, Archbishop Carlo Vigano quoted Pope Paul VI, "Modern man listens more willingly to witnesses than to teachers, and if it does listen to teachers, it is because they are witnesses." This quote comes from *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, which Pope Francis said is "the greatest pastoral document written to date." This endorsement is extraordinary considering the number of documents coming from Rome since it was published in 1975.

Archbishop Vigano also noted that Pope Francis "made a special point of saying that he wants 'pastoral' bishops, not bishops who profess or follow a particular ideology."

He concluded by urging the bishops "to preserve a spirit of real unity among yourselves and, of course, with the successor of Peter, trusting in the way he sees best to live out his mission to mankind."

[Jesuit Fr. Thomas Reese is a senior analyst for NCR. His email address is treesesj@ncronline.org.

Follow him on Twitter: @ThomasReeseSJ.]

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