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Christmas message from Archbishop Jaime Ortega Alamino

HAVANA, Wednesday, December 22, 2010 (ZENIT.org) .- Cardinal Jaime Ortega Alamino, archbishop of Havana, has presented in his Christmas message the response to the great crisis that not only the island but humanity itself goes through, rediscovering Christ.

The cardinal, who will celebrate a Christmas Mass with the prisoners of the Combinado del Este Prison in the capital on Friday, December 24, affirms that "before our eyes appear two major crises in our world: one shaped by the economic situation, misery, climate change, which can affect animal, vegetable and human life, this is the crisis that we can call material."

"But simultaneously," adds the cardinal in his letter, "there is a crisis of another order: that of the selfishness of men or societies unable to make the decisions that can save humanity, that of unrestrained spending and luxury, without repair to the misery of many."

"It is a crisis of ethics for the loss of values, for having forgotten or confronted the natural order," says the pastor of the Cuban capital. "It is a crisis of conscience, the dividing line between good and evil has been erased, this is the spiritual crisis of humanity, which is of greater significance than the material crisis because the latter is caused by the spiritual bankruptcy of the man".

"The time in which this spiritual crisis is gestated and grows coincides with the stage of recent history in which we have tried to get God out of the spiritual horizon of man. It is the moment of state atheism or secular atheism, it is time in which the Christian world invested the priority in the social order, forgetting the wise evangelical mandate of Jesus: 'Search first the Kingdom of God and its justice and everything else will come in addition', and we took on the task of searching for

everything others first: abundance of material goods, economic and political power, money, success and it has been relegated to God to the point of trying to exclude it from the lives of men and peoples ".

According to Cardinal Ortega, "this forgetfulness of God is at the base of that great spiritual crisis of today's man, a substantial part of humanity has become accustomed to not believing, to being unbeliever, and the lack of faith extends to the whole human context: you do not believe in the family, you do not believe in the common good, you do not believe in a better future Men and societies become skeptical, they remain prostrate before the future and have no hope. Us Cubans today.

"Before the things that do not go well in our world and among us," the cardinal confesses: "I only have one proposal to make them not to be swept away by the spiritual crisis that can invade them": "I invite you to do as the pastors do, they heard the announcement of the angels on Christmas night: 'Do not be afraid, in a doorway in Bethlehem the Savior, the Messiah, the Lord has been born to you.' And they went on saying: 'Let's see what he has done for us. Lord, get on the road, go to Jesus and look at him with faith in his poor cradle of straws. "

"He is the Savior, the one who comes to save them from emptiness, from lack of interest, from fear of the future, of despair," concludes the cardinal.

The leaders of the Ladies in White, Laura Pollán and Berta Soler, have applauded Cardinal Ortega's decision to celebrate Christmas with the prisoners as a gesture of support to the 11 political prisoners awaiting their release after Ortega announced in July the release of the 52 dissidents arrested during the Black Spring of 2003.

You can read the message of Cardinal Ortega on the occasion of Christmas at <http://www.palabranueva.net>