

## CUBA PAYS TRIBUTE TO ITS MOST IMPORTANT THEOLOGIAN ON HIS 85TH BIRTHDAY

Por JOSÉ AURELIO PAZ



The necessity of understanding Christian vocation in terms of fighting, and not passively observing, the current world crisis, was the central theme of Cuban theologian Sergio Arce Martínez, as he thanked ecumenical leaders for their tribute on the occasion of his 85th birthday.

Referring to the passage on the miracle of the bread and fish, the Presbyterian pastor intimated “through concrete action, concrete thought, and the structure to act concretely, we are moved by the Holy Spirit to participate in the compassion Christ offered to the multitudes not only spiritually, but materially as well.

The event, celebrated in Ebenezer Baptist Church of Marianao, was attended by the National Parliament’s President Dr. Ricardo Alarcón, civilian employees of the Office of Religious Affairs of the Central Committee of the Communist party and a nurtured group of religious leaders who wanted to share this emotional occasion with one who has been an inspiration not only to Christians, but also to students of Marxism who attempt to understand the role of the Church within the social context of Cuba.

A panel comprised of young theologian Kirenía Criado from the Martin Luther King Center, Investigator and Doctor of Philosophy Fernando Martínez Heredia of the Search and Development Center for Cuban Culture and the Reverend Deputy Raul Suarez Ramos gave a panoramic overview of the generational, sociological and pastoral contributions of Arce Martínez to the field of Cuban and Latin American theology.

For his part, Dr. Ricardo Alarcón de Quezada referred to the useful legacy of theology for new generations in spirit, as to thought and capacity to reflect, which assumes a serious study like contributing to the building of values that try to defend the Cuban society “and that can be built in many ways,” noted the President of the National Parliament.

Diverse ecumenical organs publically remembered the devotion and fidelity of thought of Arce who was presented with volume one of an anthology of his most significant writings responding, as the title says, to the question “*How is it that you do not yet Understand?*” printed by Publishing Ways.

This compilation has added value in that it has been put together by his two children, Presbyter Dora Arce Valentín of the Reformed Presbyterian Church of Cuba and Reinerio Arce Valentín, current rector of the Theological Seminary of Matanzas.

The first chapter **Theological Itinerary** has a summary of the more significant moments in the life of this controversial theologian (told in first person) who has made his manner of living a model of integration of Christianity and the revolutionaries of the very special Cuban panorama.

Organized by the Dr. Martin Luther King Memorial Center and the Theological Seminary of Matanzas to pay tribute to undoubtedly the most highly regarded Cuban theologian in the last 50 years.

**Dear brothers and sisters: we are sending you information about the tribute paid to the Dr. Sergio Arce Martinez, by the Martin L. King Memorial Center and the Evangelical Seminary of Theology of Matanzas, in occasion of Dr. Arce's 85 birthday.**

**Con fraternos saludos,**

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