

  
**PRESS RELEASE**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**July 28, 2011**

**STATEMENT ON THE DEATH OF ARCHBISHOP PIETRO SAMBI,  
VATICAN AMBASSADOR TO THE UNITED STATES**

**By Archbishop José H. Gomez**

**Archbishop of Los Angeles**

The death of Archbishop Pietro Sambì is a great loss for the Universal Church, and especially for the Catholic Church in the United States. On behalf of the Catholic faithful of the Archdiocese of Los Angeles, I offer my prayers for the repose of his soul, as well as my condolences to his family.

Archbishop Sambì spent 42 years in the diplomatic service of the Holy See. His impressive resume included service in Cuba, Algeria, Nicaragua, Belgium, India, Cameroon, and Jerusalem and Palestine. But he had a special affection for his last posting, as papal nuncio to the United States. In speaking to U.S. bishops last fall, he said, "Here the Lord has planted me, here I must flourish. This has become my home, this has become my people; to put all my energies at its service is my joy and my crown."

One of Archbishop Sambì's duties as papal nuncio was to inform many an unsuspecting American priest and bishop that the Holy Father had appointed them to the episcopacy or to a different assignment. I will always remember that it was Archbishop Sambì who called me in San Antonio one day to tell me that I had been named the Archbishop of Los Angeles. His friendly voice and kind words of encouragement were comforting to me at that surprising moment in my life.

Eternal rest grant unto him, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon him.

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