

## Embrace The Rainbow

### EDITORIAL

by **Monsignor William J. Linder**

There is something very special about diversity. As I watched members of my own parish marching down the center aisle recently carrying their country's flags during International Harvest Festival, it reminded me that we are indeed one people, God's family. It matters not whether someone comes from South America, the Caribbean, Europe or Africa, each one of us is entitled to be treated with the same respect that comes with being a human being and a very special part of God's creation. I am sad to report, however, that an appreciation of this multiculturalism, which is what makes the human race so unique and dynamic, is becoming a growing point of disdain in some circles.

If there was ever an individual who deserves and should command the utmost respect from all of us, it is the President of the United States. The very office alone dictates this. That is why the startling incident involving Rep. Joe Wilson (R-South Carolina) interrupting President Barack Obama's speech to a joint session of Congress recently with the outburst, "You lie!" proved to be so upsetting. No sitting member of Congress had ever before behaved in such a rude, disrespectful manner towards the President. It showed total disrespect for the person and the highest office in the land. One cannot easily dismiss suggestions that there were racial undertones to the congressman's act. Some digging into Congressman's background found that Wilson was a staunch defender of flying the Confederate flag over the South Carolina Statehouse.

It is this same flag, during the historic march from Selma to Montgomery in 1965, that would stop me dead in my tracks, as I watched it hanging at the Statehouse in Montgomery Alabama as we entered the city. As an American, I knew this symbol of division had no place being displayed on a government building. More than 40 years have passed since then and the wonderful, multicultural tapestry that is our America in 2009 is sadly still not appreciated by all. Consider this. The next time you are in a church, just look at the stained glass windows. Then try imagining what they would look like if they were painted in only one color.