

# *Cuban religious and government authorities attend Cardinal Ortega's funeral in Havana*

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Havana, July 28 (RHC)--Religious and Cuban authorities attended Sunday the funeral mass of Cardinal Jaime Ortega, celebrated in Havana's Cathedral. Floral offerings by the leader of the Cuban Communist Party, Raúl Castro, and President Miguel Díaz-Canel, adorned the baroque style temple that housed Ortega's mortal remains for three days.

Salvador Valdés Mesa, first vice president of the Councils of State and Ministers was in attendance, alongside Esteban Lazo Hernández, president of the National Assembly of People's Power, Roberto Morales Ojeda, vice president of the Councils of State and Ministers, as well as other Party and Government officials.

Religious leaders from other countries including Miami Archbishop Thomas Wenski, Puerto Rico Archbishop Roberto Gonzalez Nieves and Cardinal Seán Patrick O'Malley of Boston also attended the funeral ceremony.

Ortega, who died on Friday at the age of 82, was buried in the city's Colon cemetery.

Cardinal Jaime Ortega Alamino, Archbishop Emeritus of San Cristóbal de La Habana was born in Jagüey Grande, Province of Matanzas on October 18, 1936.

With a religious vocation from an early age, he was ordained a priest on August 2, 1964, archbishop on June 14, 1979 and a cardinal, the second in the history of Cuba, on November 26, 1986.

He was president of the Conferences of Catholic Bishops of Cuba from 1988 to 1998, and then from 2001 to 2004. He also hosted the visit to Cuba of the last three popes: John Paul II in 1998, Benedict XVI in 2012 and Francis in 2015.

Cardinal Ortega made significant contribution to relations between the Catholic Church and the Cuban State. He carried letters from Pope Francis to Presidents Raúl Castro Ruz and Barack Obama as a contribution to the restoration of diplomatic relations between Cuba and the United States in 2014.

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