

# *Bolivian President Evo Morales Gives Communist Crucifix to the Pope*

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La Paz, July 10 (teleSUR-RHC)-- Bolivian President Evo Morales offered the Pope Francis a wooden hammer and sickle with a figure of a crucified Christ resting on the hammer, among other gifts, as a tribute to the Spanish Jesuit priest Luis Espinal.

Espinal was a prominent figure of the Theology of Liberation, and made himself such objects as a symbol of his commitment to social struggles and of his sympathy for communist ideals. Pope Francis himself paid tribute to the priest during his visit in the Andean country, praying where the priest was murdered 35 years ago for his ideas.

Luis Espinal, born in Spain in 1932, entered the Jesuit company at 16 years old, with which he was sent on mission to Bolivia. In 1971, he was granted the Bolivian nationality, after what he dedicated his life to the under-privileged population, while criticizing some conservative positions of the Catholic Church.

In his visit to La Paz, the Pope commemorated the Spanish Jesuit Priest Luis Espinal, who was assassinated in 1980 during the dictatorship of Luis Garcia Meza. "Espinal preached the gospel and the gospel upset (the government of Luis Garcia Meza) so it eliminated him. Let's take a minute of silence in prayer and then pray together," said the Pope.

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