

# Mexican cardinal killed in shootout

By Mike Tangeman  
Catholic News Service

MEXICO CITY — Mexican Cardinal Juan Jesus Posadas Ocampo was killed May 24 in the cross-fire of a shootout at the Guadalajara airport that church sources say may have been linked to the recent upsurge of drug-related violence in Mexico.

The 66-year-old archbishop of Guadalajara and vice president of the Mexican bishops' conference died of as many as 14 gunshot wounds to the chest and throat while being driven through the airport parking lot, where much of the gun battle took place.

Also killed were the cardinal's driver, identified as 33-year-old Pedro Perez Hernandez by archdiocesan spokesman Father Adalberto Gonzalez. According to Mexican television news reports, five other bystanders were also killed, including an unidentified woman and her young son.

Initial reports said the shootout erupted around 3 p.m. between rival gangs inside the terminal at the inter-

## Prelate caught in airport cross-fire

national departures counter. It spilled out into the parking lot with police in pursuit.

Hand grenades and AK-47 assault rifles were found in vehicles believed to belong to gang members.

Cardinal Posadas was the third cardinal to die violently in this century. Cardinal Emile Biayende of Brazzaville, Congo, was slain in tribal violence in 1974 and Cardinal Juan Soldevilla of Zaragoza, Spain, was murdered by anarchists in 1923.

Initial accounts from official sources and Mexican press reports were contradictory, but Father Gonzalez told Catholic News Service that the cardinal and his driver were killed as they came to the airport to await the arrival of the Vatican's delegate to Mexico, Archbishop Girolamo Prigione, who was flying in from Mexico City.

An employee at the apostolic delegation in Mexico City confirmed to CNS that Archbishop Prigione was en route to Guadalajara at the time. The employee, who asked not to be named, said the Mexican government's Interior Secretariat later telephoned the delegation to assure the staff that the shootout was not connected to the delegate's trip to Guadalajara.

In Mexico City, government sources maintained virtual silence while Mexican President Carlos Salinas de Gortari flew to Guadalajara on the evening of the shooting to pay his respects to the slain cardinal at the city's cathedral.

In a brief statement at the city's airport, Salinas called the murder a "reprehensible act" and said that "the life of a good, a clean and a generous man was taken in a criminal act."

"This act cannot be accepted, there is no justification for it (and) it merits our widest condemnation," Salinas said.

The Mexican president was accompanied on the flight by Archbishop Adolfo Suarez Rivera of Monterrey, **Continued on page 5**



## Season of glory will culminate with Pentecost

By Mary Lu Coffey  
Guest contributor

Today we celebrate our church's great beginning when the Holy Spirit made known to all people the one true God and created from the many languages of humanity one voice to process one faith.

These words from the Mass' preface for Pentecost give this day's flavor, the culmination of our 90-day season of Lent-Easter time. We began in ashes, proclaiming the fast and reminded of our mortality and sinfulness and our need for reconciliation.

We walked with our catechumens and candidates to Calvary and to the font at the Easter Vigil. There we bravely gathered in the night and dared to kindle new fire to light our Easter candle. We brought that tiny flame into the darkened church and told our story of salvation once more.

All through these 50 days of the Easter season we have rejoiced and celebrated and marveled at the wonder of the Easter sacraments. Encouraged by the promises of the Good Shepherd who will "not leave us orphans" we have tried to be ready for a violent wind, for the Spirit who turns over tables and whips open the doors.

Now it is Pentecost. Our journey of faith has brought us here. Once more the community gathers to hear the story of that frightened band of disciples locked in the upper room who were invaded by the Spirit. As tongues of fire hovered over them they were emboldened, their hearts were filled with courage, the doors flung open, and they began to proclaim what Jesus had shown them of God's reconciling love.

For us gathered in the last decade of the 20th century, this is a call to action, a sending forth once more. How much our weary world needs to be warmed with the Spirit's fire. Added to our number to perform this awesome task are our neophytes, our adult catechumens and candidates, who absolutely require that we go forth to proclaim our good news with them, who absolutely require that we allow them to join us in our mission to transform our world.

And so together we pray in these words of the opening prayer (alternate) of the Mass for Pentecost:

God of light from whom every good gift comes  
send your Spirit into our lives with the power of a mighty wind,  
and by the flame of your wisdom open the horizons of our minds.  
Loosen our tongues to sing your praise  
in words beyond the power of speech  
for without your Spirit we could never raise our voices in words of peace  
or announce the truth that Jesus is Lord.  
Come Holy Spirit, come.

Coffey is a member of the Diocesan Liturgical Commission.

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again and again and again.