



I never had the privilege of meeting Father Pelton in person, but I knew of his work, both academic and personal, prior to gauging his interest in contributing a chapter to an anthology on the topic of religion and society in Latin America. I was thrilled when he agreed, and sent him a list of themes for him to consider, such as subsidiarity, the role of CEBs, and the Church's views on social issues in contemporary Latin America. I received a thoughtful, forceful, and beautifully written essay that became the capstone of the book. Just one little story... When I assigned this chapter in one of my courses in 2009, I was greatly looking forward to receiving feedback from students about Father Pelton's considerable expertise, and I prefaced my remarks to students by telling them that he had participated in the Second Vatican Council and in every CELAM conference since Vatican II, including the one held in Aparecida in 2007. I fully expected students to be impressed with his knowledge of and experience in the topic at hand, which they were, but the first response I got from a student was, "Dear God, how old is this man?" I responded, "thankfully, old enough and experienced enough to know what he's talking about."

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