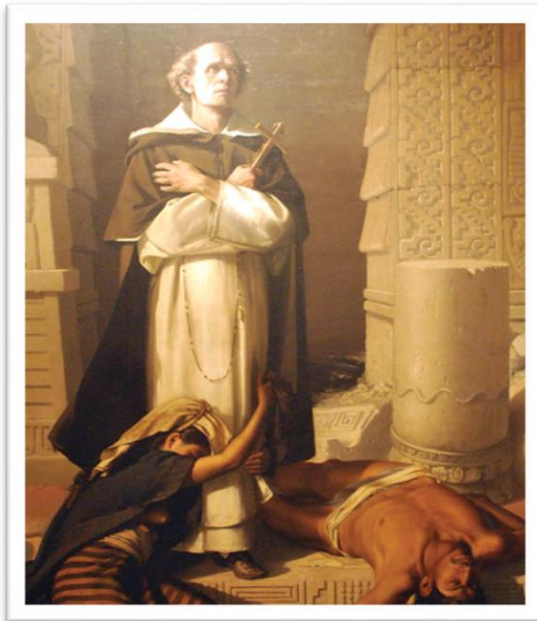


Christopher Columbus petitioned the Crown of Spain until the day he died to end the oppression of the indigenes that Bobadilla and his successors exacted, inspiring Friar Bartolomé de las Casas to become the official “Protector of the Indians,” and continue Columbus’s fight for their civil rights.

De las Casas penned *Historia de las Indias*, the main primary source of Columbus’s efforts.



The 500 years of the “Columbian Exchange” of culture, science, technology, law, commerce, art, music, literature, and people has benefitted and enriched the world from pole to pole. In 1775, Phyllis Wheatly, a 14-year-old, free African-American girl wrote a poem about “Columbia,” starting a chain of events that wove Columbus into the fabric of American identity, culminating with the Founding Fathers naming the American capital after him.

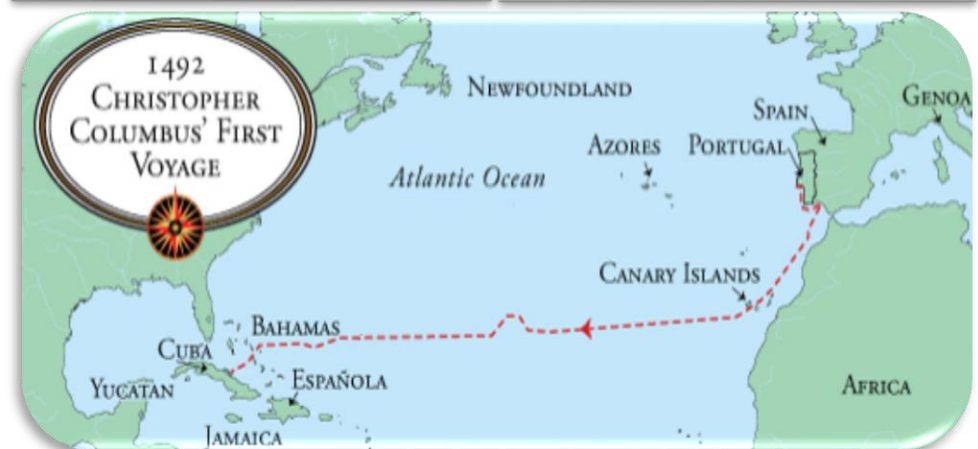
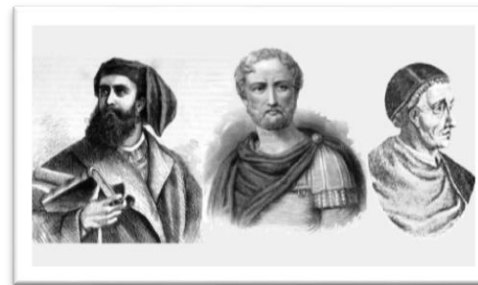


For more information on “Christopher Columbus: The First Civil Rights Activist of the Americas,” an electronic version of this pamphlet, and/or the reports to Philadelphia City Council regarding preserving the holiday of Columbus Day, please e-mail RobertPetrone@yahoo.com.

Christopher Columbus: The First Civil Rights Activist of the Western Hemisphere



Christopher Columbus was a self-taught polymath who mastered the works of Marco Polo, Pliny the Elder and Pierre D’Ailly to seek an all-water route to Asia, discovering on the way, two new continents; founding the first permanent European settlements there; and opening communication between the Old World and the New.



The surging slander and lies against Christopher Columbus are part of a rising tide of anti-Italian and anti-European sentiment sweeping the nation.



Primary sources of historical records describe Columbus as kind, patient, affable, cheerful, forgiving, and pious. He initiated *friendly* relations with the indigenes of the Americas, whom he described as “intelligent,” “trustworthy,” “beautiful” and the makings of “good Christians.”

Christopher Columbus became best friends with the Taino chieftain Guacanagarí, who, as Columbus put it, “gloried in calling me his brother.” Guacanagarí was killed by a rival tribe, and Columbus adopted his son, who received Baptism, took the name Diego, and traveled with Columbus as an interpreter.



Great atrocities against the indigenes of the Caribbean did occur, but were committed by a bloodthirsty Knight Commander of the *Reconquista*, Comendador Francisco Fernández de Bobadilla, intent on deposing Columbus as governor of the West Indies and usurping the title for himself.



Bobadilla allied with the greedy *hidalgos*, low noblemen and landowners of the Spanish feudal system, who resented Columbus’s regulations requiring them to toil and forbidding them from enslaving and exploiting the indigenes.



Bobadilla lied to the Crown about alleged misdeeds by Columbus and sent him back to Spain in chains. Columbus completely exonerated himself in Court, and the Crown funded his fourth voyage to the Americas.