

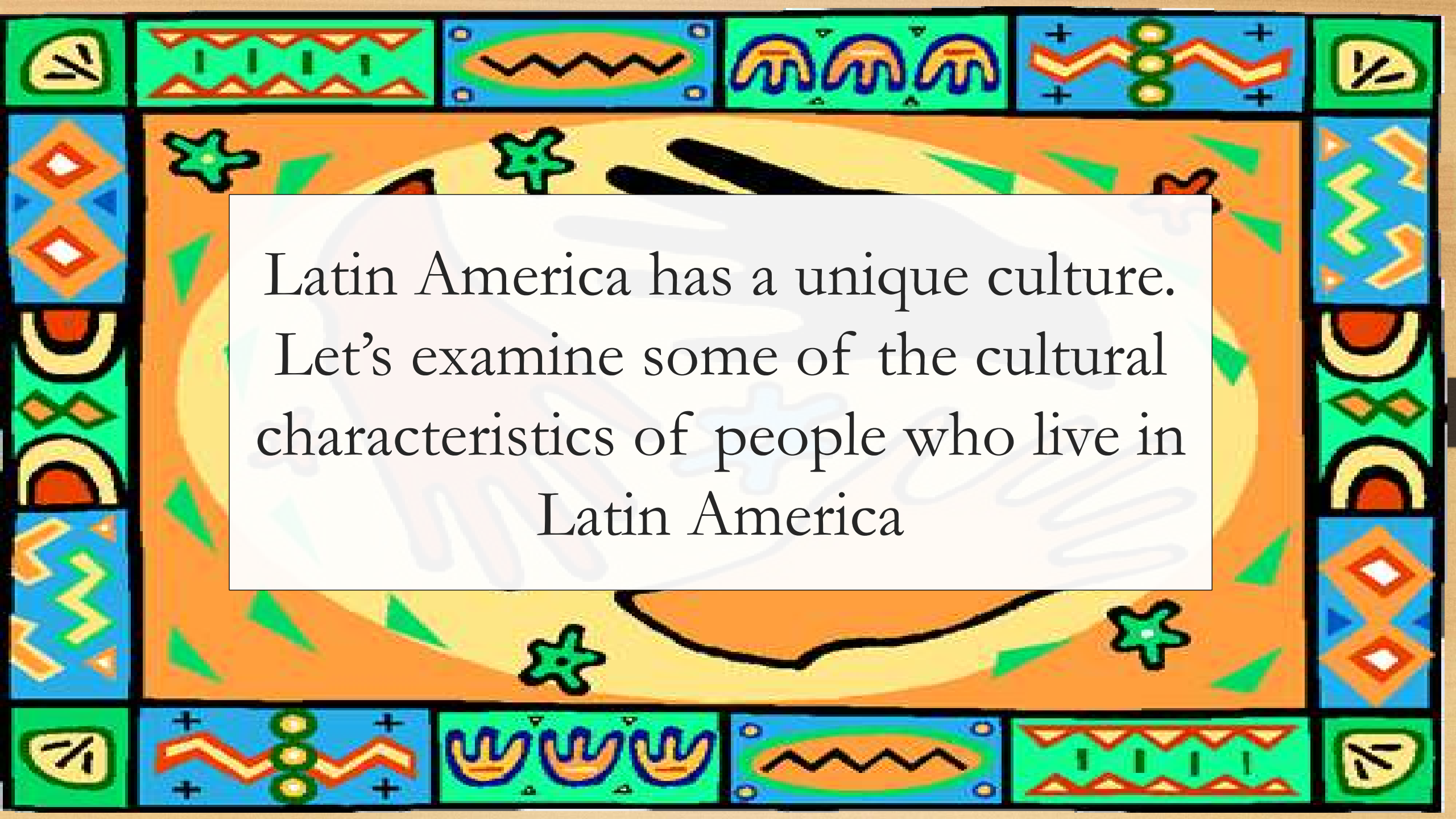
Imagine arriving in a new country and having no way of communicating with the people living there. How would you feel? What kind of strategies would you develop until one of the groups learns the other language?

Cultural Legacy

Language and Religion

SS6H2b: Describe the influence of the Spanish and the Portuguese on the language and religions of Latin America

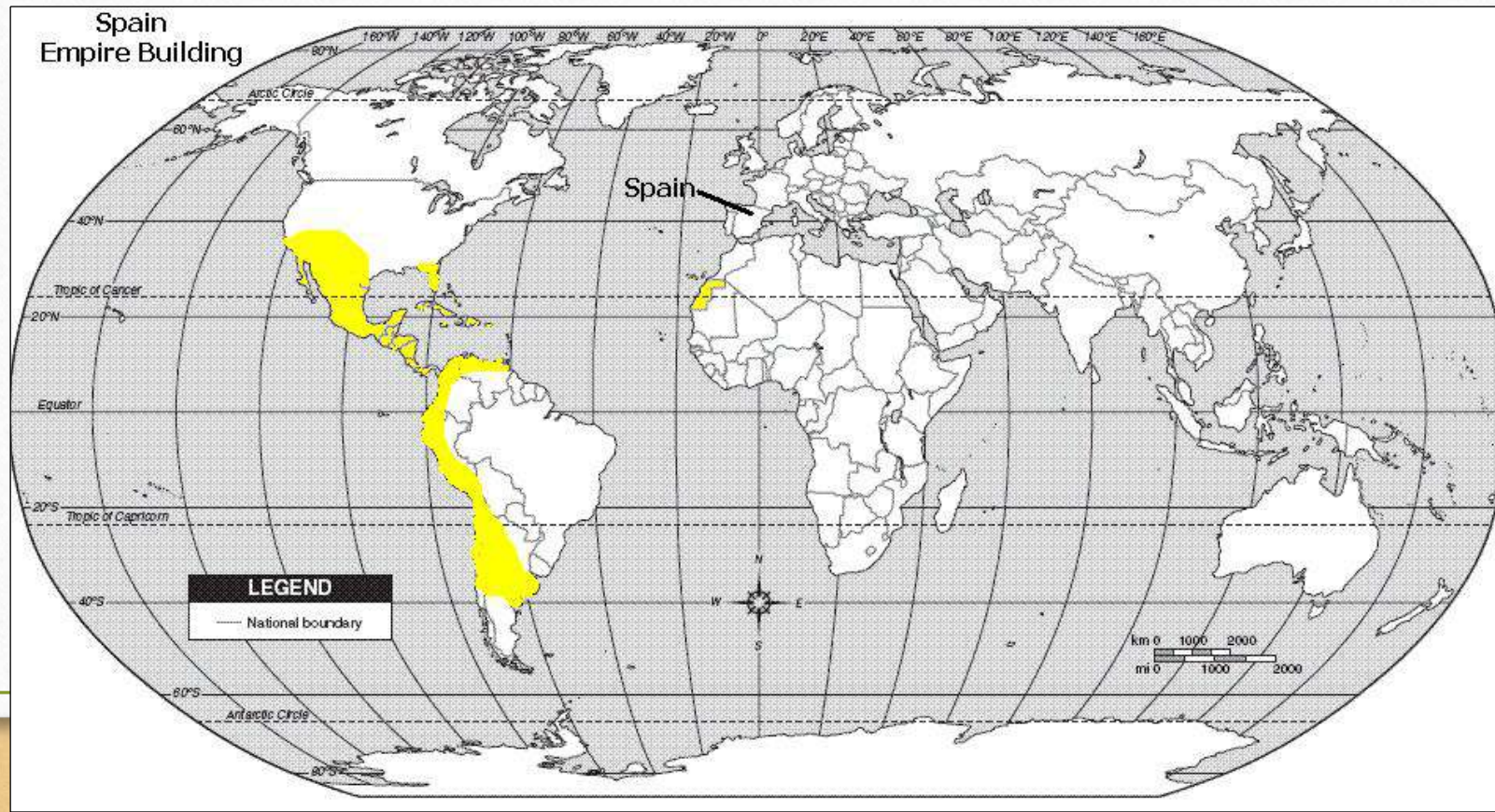




Latin America has a unique culture.
Let's examine some of the cultural
characteristics of people who live in
Latin America

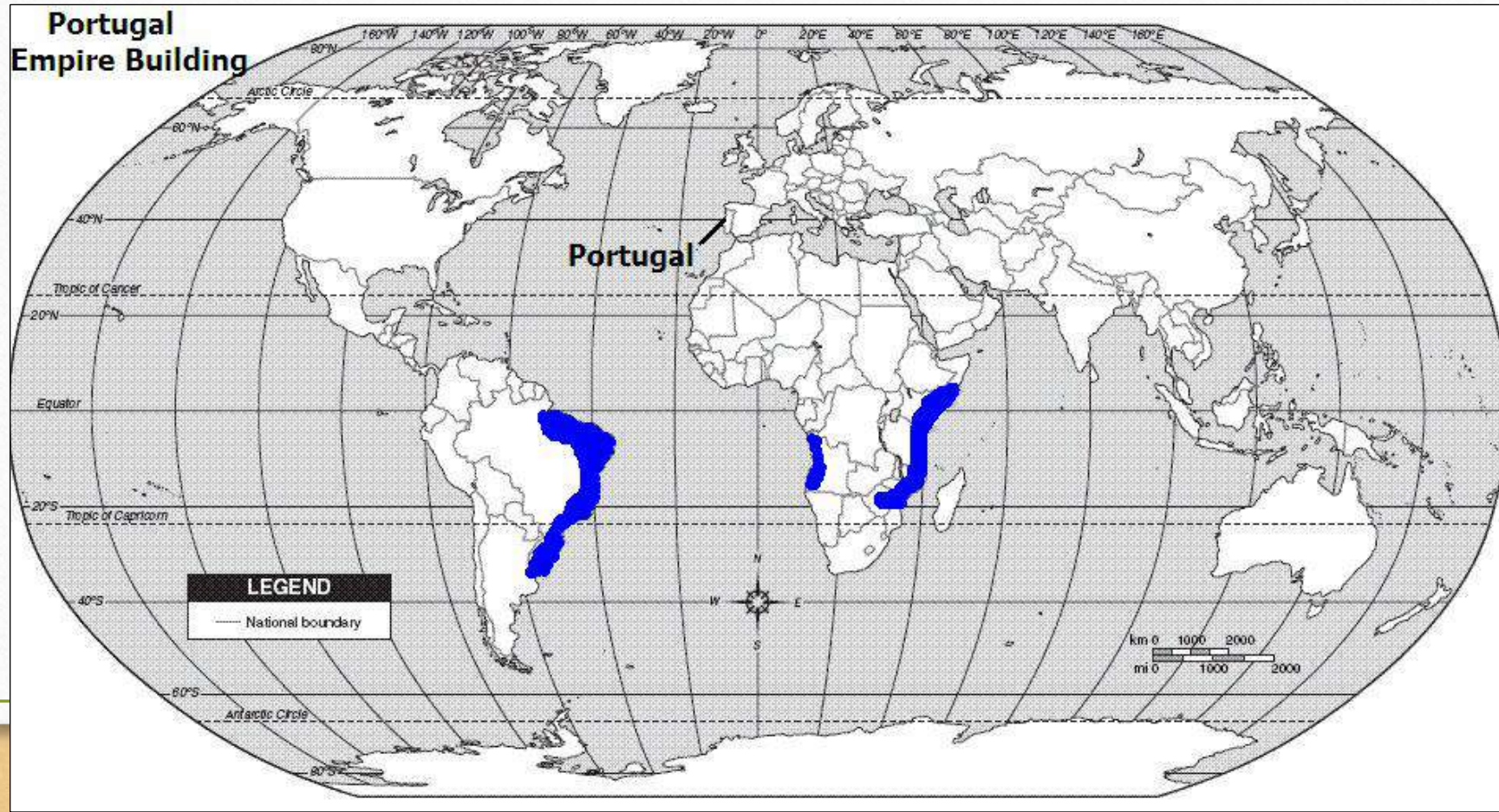
Languages of Latin America

Most countries in Latin America speak Spanish as a result of being former colonies of Spain.



Languages of Latin America

The official language of Brazil is Portuguese because this is where Portugal established a colony in the New World.



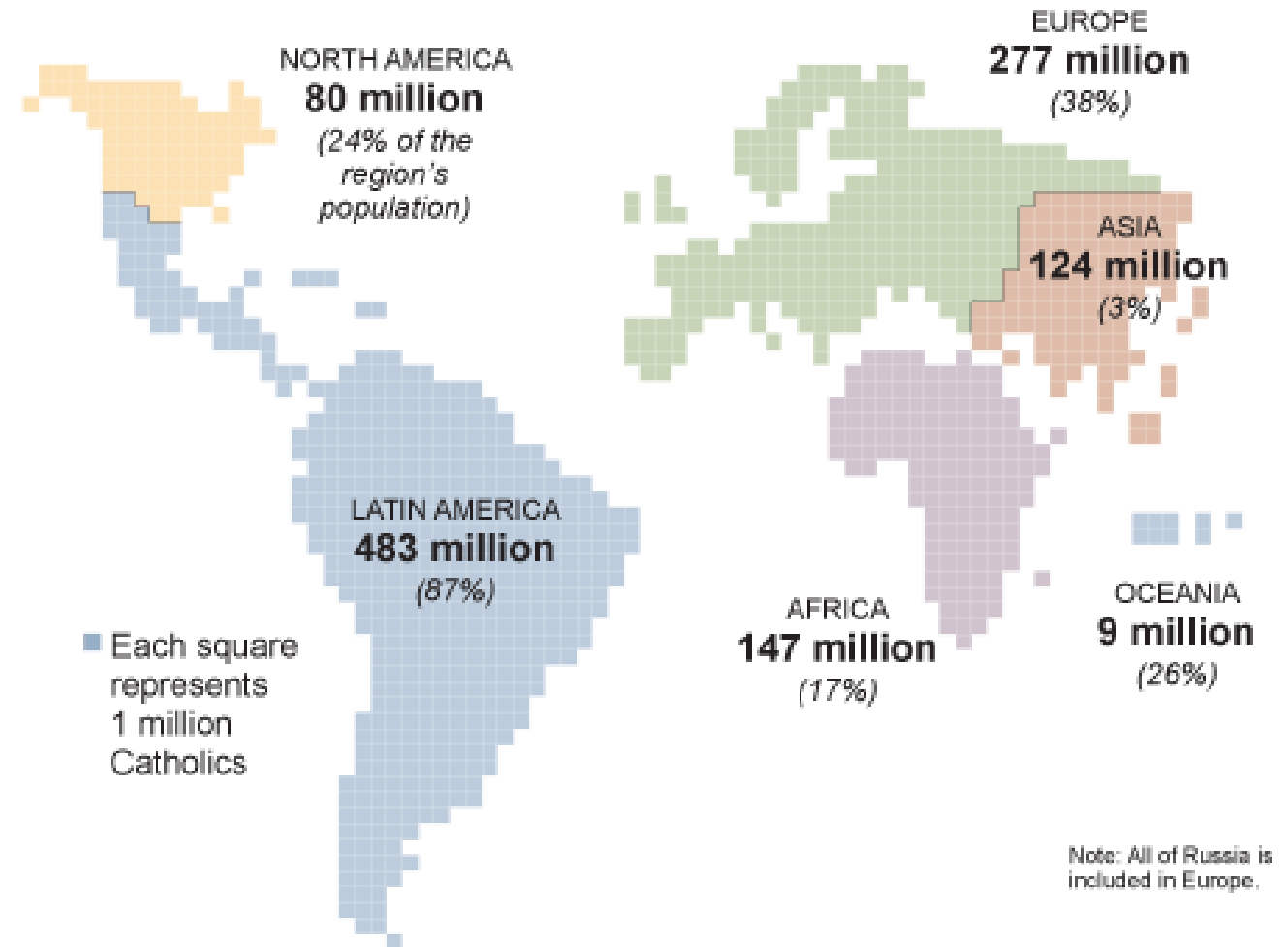
Languages of Latin America

- The people of French Guiana and Haiti speak French.
- The people of the Bahamas, Jamaica and Guyana speak English.
- The people in Suriname speak Dutch



Religion in Latin America

- Latin America's dominant religion is Roman Catholicism. Over 90% of people in the region claim to be Catholic.
- The Catholic Church played a major role in expanding the Spanish language in the New World.
- In Mexico, and later California, Catholic priests established missions, or outposts, where the Indians learned the Spanish language and the Spanish way of life.



Although Latin America has the same basic language and religion, its culture is very diverse. What caused this diversity?

European colonization not only brought changes in language and religion to Latin America, it also influenced other aspects of culture.

The people and culture of Latin America are an interesting blend of the indigenous [native] people and the countries that established colonies there.

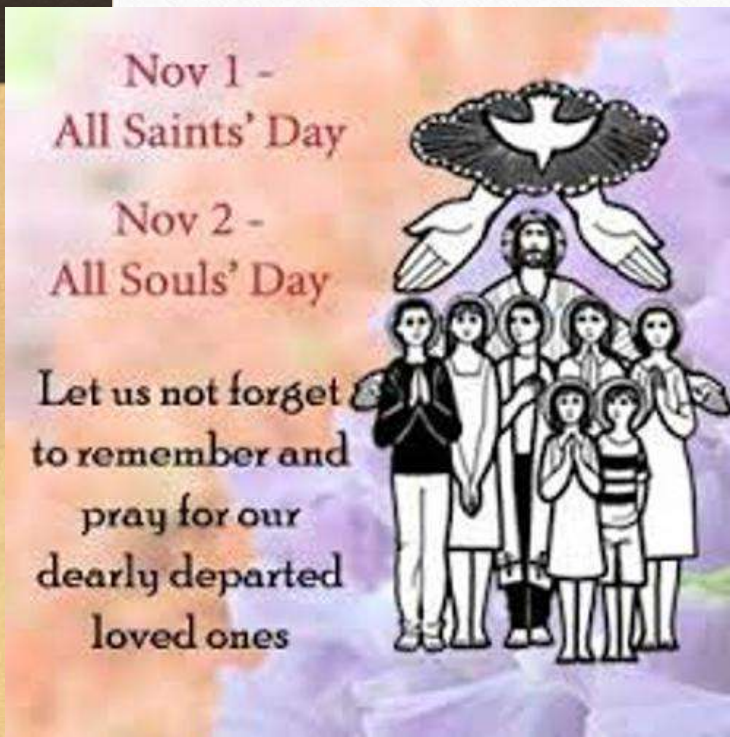
Once Europeans settled in Latin American, ethnic groups began to blend together.

The cultural diffusion was not just limited to the Europeans, though. African slaves brought with them a rich culture. One of the many aspects of their proud heritage is music. Some of the most famous Latin American music, such as samba, mambo, rumba, and salsa mix African and Spanish rhythms.





All Saints' Day
and All Soul's
Day
Celebrations
(left side)



Day of the
Dead
celebrations
(right side)



- The best example of cultural blending in Latin America today is probably the people. In some parts of this region, like Bolivia, Peru, and Guatemala, a majority of the population is Native American. In most parts of Latin America, however, this is not true.
- Mexico and some South American countries like Chile, Paraguay, and Venezuela have people called mestizos. A **mestizo** is a person of mixed Native American and Spanish ancestry.
- Some Europeans married black slaves that were brought to Latin America from Africa. People of mixed European and black ancestry were called **mulattoes**.

True or False

1. Spanish is the primary language of Latin America.
2. Spanish is the official language of Brazil.
3. Very few people follow the Catholic religion in Latin America.
4. Catholic priests helped expand the Spanish language by teaching Spanish to the Indians.
5. Spanish and Portuguese settlers had little influence on the culture of Latin America today.

If you lived here which language would you speak? Why? Which religion?

