



The Holy See

**VIDEO MESSAGE OF HIS HOLINESS POPE FRANCIS
AT THE VIGIL OF THE APOSTOLIC JOURNEY TO ECUADOR, BOLIVIA AND PARAGUAY
[5-12 JULY 2015]**

Dear Brothers and Sisters of Ecuador, Bolivia and Paraguay,

There is little time before my visit. With this preliminary greeting, I would like to express my closeness, my affection and my good will. My wish is to be with you, to share your concerns, to express my love and closeness, as well as rejoice with you.

I want to be a witness of the joy of the Gospel and bring to you the tenderness and caress of God, our Father, especially to his children most in need, to the elderly, the sick, the imprisoned, the poor, to those who are victims of this throw-away culture. The love of the merciful Father allows us beyond measure to discover the face of his Son Jesus in each of our brothers, in each of our sisters, in our neighbour. One only needs to come close, to be a neighbour. As Jesus said to that young doctor of the law when he asked: Who is my neighbour? Go and do what the Good Samaritan did, go and do the same, be close, do not pass by.

On this visit I will visit three sister nations in the lands of the American continent. The faith that we all share is a source of brotherhood and solidarity, which builds villages, which forms family of families, it fosters harmony and encourages the desire and commitment to peace.

In these days before our meeting, I give thanks to God for you, and I ask that you be steadfast in the faith, that you may have the fire of love, of charity and that you hold fast to the hope that never disappoints. I urge you to unite your prayers to mine so that the announcement of the Gospel can reach to the farthest outskirts and continue to make the values of the Kingdom of God a leaven of the earth in our days as well.

May the Blessed Virgin take care of you, as Mother of America and may the Lord bless you. Thank you, see you soon and please, do not forget to pray for me.

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