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# **BOLLETTINO**

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## **Video Message of the Holy Father Francis for his upcoming Apostolic Visit to Colombia from 6 to 11 September**

The following is the text of the Holy Father Francis' video message to the Colombian people on the occasion of his upcoming visit to Colombia:

### **Video Message of the Holy Father**

Dear people of Colombia, in a few days' time I will visit your country. I will come as a pilgrim of hope and peace, to celebrate with you faith in our Lord and also to learn from your charity and your perseverance in the search for peace and harmony.

I cordially greet and thank Mr. President and the bishops of the Episcopal Conference for the invitation to visit Colombia. I also thank each one of you for welcoming me to your land and in your heart. I know you have worked – and you have worked hard – to prepare for this meeting. My thanks go to all those who have collaborated and continue to do so, so that it may become a reality.

“Let us take the first step” is the motto of this trip. It reminds us that we always need to take a first step in any activity and project. It also inspires us to be the first to love, to build bridges, to create brotherhood. To take the first step encourages us to go out towards the other, to extend a hand and exchange a sign of peace. Peace is what Colombia seeks, and she has striven to achieve this for a long time. A stable, lasting peace, so that we can see and treat each other as brothers, not as enemies. I am honoured to visit this land, rich in history, culture, faith, men and women who have worked with determination and perseverance to make it a place where harmony and brotherhood prevail, where the Gospel is known and loved, where saying “brother” or “sister” does not seem like a strange sign, but rather a genuine treasure to protect and defend. Today's world needs counsellors of peace and dialogue. The Church too is called to this task, to promote reconciliation with the Lord and with our brothers, but also reconciliation with the environment that is God's creation and which we are exploiting wildly.

May this visit be like a fraternal embrace to each one of you, in which we feel the consolation and the tenderness of the Lord.

Dear Colombian brothers and sisters, I wish to live these days with you with a joyful heart, with gratitude to the Lord. I embrace you with affection and ask the Lord to bless you, that He may protect your country and grant peace. And I ask our Mother, the Holy Virgin, to keep you. And do not forget to pray for me. Thank you, and I will see you soon.

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