



## **AMERICA/MEXICO - Benedict XVI in the land watered by the blood of the martyrs who died to defend faith**

Leon (Agenzia Fides) - Pope Benedict XVI during his visit to Mexico, "will tread the land that was wet with the blood of martyrs" who fought to defend their faith in times of persecution. This is what Mgr. Fidel Hernández Lara, Episcopal Vicar of the Mexican Archdiocese of León said to Aciprensa, about the Pope's forthcoming visit to the Latin American country, whose program has just been released by the Vatican Press Office. Looking at the history of Mexico, one can see how faith has always been deeply rooted in the people, to the point that "it was able to shed blood for what was being trampled on, such as its faith." Mgr. Lara then recalled that the last cry of many who were shot during the religious persecution of the '20s was "Long live Christ the King". The Pope will celebrate the principal Mass of his visit to Mexico, not far from the monument dedicated to Christ the King, and will be as if today "Christ the King said, 'this is my vicar, which crosses the land that was watered with the blood of the martyrs'." The Pope's visit, said the Episcopal Vicar of the Archdiocese of Leon, will help all Mexicans "to confirm our faith, to awaken in us a greater loyalty and devotion to Jesus Christ".

The Holy Father will arrive at the International Airport of Guanajuato (in Silao town) on March 23 in the afternoon. The following day he will visit the Federal President, then he will meet the children at the Plaza de la Paz, in Guanajuato. On Sunday, March 25 he will celebrate Mass, followed by the Angelus, at the Bicentennial Park in León. In the afternoon, the Vespers with the Bishops of Mexico and Latin America in the Cathedral of the Blessed Mother of the Light in Leon. On Monday, March 26 the Pope will leave Mexico to go to Cuba (SL)  
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