



VATICAN - The Pope at the Angelus: "My apostolic visit to Lebanon, and by extension in the Middle East as a whole, is placed under the sign of peace"

Vatican City (Agenzia Fides) - After the Angelus prayer at noon on Sunday, September 9 at the Apostolic Palace of Castel Gandolfo, the Holy Father Benedict XVI, speaking in French, announced his next trip Lebanon. These are his words: "Dear pilgrims here, or participate in the Angelus through radio or television, in the coming days, I will go on an apostolic visit to Lebanon to sign the Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation, the result of the Special Assembly for the Middle East of the Synod of Bishops, held in October 2010. I will have the opportunity of meeting the Lebanon's people and leaders as well as the Christians of this beloved country and those in neighboring countries. I am aware of the often dramatic situation experienced by the people of this region, too long torn apart by incessant conflicts. I understand the anguish of many Middle Eastern people immersed in daily suffering of all kinds, which sadly, and at times mortally, plague, their personal and family life. My concerned thoughts go out to those who, in search of a place of peace, leave their family and professional life, and experience the precariousness of being exiles. So, even though the search for solutions to the various problems affecting the region seems difficult, we cannot resign ourselves to the violence and exasperation of tensions. A commitment to dialogue and reconciliation must be a priority for all parties involved, and must be supported by the international community, increasingly aware of the importance of a stable and lasting peace in the region for the whole world. My apostolic visit to Lebanon, and by extension in the Middle East as a whole, is placed under the sign of peace, referring to the words of Christ: "My peace I give to you" (John 14:27). May God bless Lebanon and the Middle East! May God bless you all!" (SL) (Agenzia Fides 10/09/2012)