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VATICAN - The Pope to the second group of Bishops of Colombia, "wherever Christ reaches, harmony opens a way, hatred gives place to forgiveness and rivalry is transformed into fraternity"

Castel Gandolfo (Agenzia Fides) - "The history of Colombia is indelibly marked by the profound Catholic faith of its people, by their love for the Eucharist, their devotion to the Virgin Mary and the witness of charity of outstanding pastors and lay people. The announcement of the Gospel has produced fruit among you with abundant vocations to priesthood and consecrated life, the willingness of the mission ad gentes, in the birth of apostolic movements, as well as in pastoral vitality of the parish community." This is what the Holy Father Benedict XVI's recalled on receiving in audience in the Apostolic Palace of Castel Gandolfo, September 10, the second group of Bishops of Colombia, on the occasion of their Ad Limina visit.
The Pope mentioned "the devastating effects of increasing secularisation, which is affecting people's lifestyles and upsetting their scale of values," stressing that "the tireless defense and promotion of the institution of the family continues to be a pastoral priority" and calling the Bishops" to continue to proclaim the integral truth about the family, founded on marriage as a domestic Church and a shrine of life".
The Holy Father expressed his support for the Episcopal Conference of Colombia's Global Plan (2012-2020) and its overall objective of "promoting the processes of new evangelization in order to form missionary disciples, encourage ecclesial communion and modify society on the basis of Gospel values". Pope Benedict XVI invited the Bishops to consecrate "their best ministry" to the priests, deacons and religious under their care helping them in "their spiritual, intellectual and material life, so that they can live their ministry in a faithful and fruitful manner." "Do not stop to focus on the care of vocations and the initial formation of candidates for Holy Orders or religious life," the Pope continued, it would be appropriate for you to favor a revision of the content and methodology of their formation, because "it responds to the challenges of the present time and the urgent needs and requirements of the people of God. In the same way, it is important to promote proper youth ministry, through which the new generations perceive with clarity that Christ seeks and wishes to offer them his friendship."
Finally, the Pope focused on the social situation of the nation with these words: "Notwithstanding a number of hopeful signs, violence continues to bring suffering, solitude, death and injustice to many brothers and sisters in Colombia. While I recognize and thank you for the pastoral mission which, often in places beset with difficulties and dangers, is being carried out in support of so many people who are unjustly suffering in your beloved country, I encourage you to continue to defend human life and cultivate peace, drawing inspiration from the example of our Savior and humbly entreating His grace. Sow the Gospel and you will reap reconciliation, knowing that, wherever Christ reaches, harmony opens a way, hatred gives place to forgiveness and rivalry is transformed into fraternity." (SL) (Agenzia Fides 11/09/2012)

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The full text of the Pope's speech, in Spanish: http://www.fides.org/spa/documents/AdL_ColombiaII_10092012.doc:

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