



The Holy See

**VIDEO MESSAGE OF HIS HOLINESS POPE FRANCIS
AT THE VIGIL OF THE APOSTOLIC JOURNEY
TO THE CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC
[25-30 NOVEMBER 2015]**

Dear Brothers and Sisters of the Central African Republic,

Just days before the journey that will bring me among you, I wish to express to you the joy that dwells in me, and indeed to greet each one of you with the greatest affection, regardless of your ethnic group or religion. It is the first time in my life that I will come to the African continent, so lovely and rich in its nature, its populations and its cultures, and I expect beautiful discoveries and enriching meetings.

For too long your dear country has experienced a situation of violence and insecurity, of which many of you are innocent victims. The purpose of my visit is, first of all, to bring you, in the name of Jesus, the comfort of consolation and hope. I hope with all my heart that my visit may contribute, in one way or another, to healing your wounds and to opening a more peaceful future for Central Africa and all its inhabitants.

The theme of this visit will be: *Let us pass to the other shore*. It is a theme that invites your Christian communities to look ahead resolutely, and to encourage everyone to renew their relationship with God and with their brothers and sisters in order to build a more just and fraternal world. I will have the joy, notably, of opening for you — a bit in advance — the *Jubilee Year of Mercy*, which will be for each one, I hope, the providential occasion for genuine forgiveness, for receiving and giving, and for renewal in love.

I come to you as a messenger of peace. I wholeheartedly support interreligious dialogue to encourage peaceful coexistence in your country. I know that this is possible, because we are all brothers and sisters.

I ask you to pray for me. I implore the help of the Virgin Mary and I say to you: “see you soon”.

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