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# **BOLLETTINO**

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## **Video Message of the Holy Father Francis on the occasion of his imminent Pilgrimage to the Shrine of Our Lady of Fátima, in Portugal (12-13 May 2017)**

The following is the full text of the video message of the Holy Father Francis, transmitted to the Portuguese people this evening at 18.00 (local time) on the occasion of the imminent pilgrimage to the Shrine of Our Lady of Fátima, to commemorate the centenary of the apparitions of the Blessed Virgin Mary at the Cova da Iria, Portugal.

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

Dear People of Portugal,

Only a few days remain before our pilgrimage, mine and yours, to the feet of Our Lady of Fatima. These are days of joy in expectation of our encounter in the home of Mary our Mother. I know that you wanted me to come to your homes and communities, your towns and cities. I received all your invitations! Needless to say, I would have liked to accept every one of them, but I cannot. So I am grateful even now for the understanding with which the various Authorities accepted my decision to restrict my Visit to the usual events associated with a pilgrimage to the Shrine of Fatima. I want to meet everyone at the feet of the Virgin Mother.

It is as the universal pastor of the Church that I would like to come before the Madonna and to offer her a bouquet of the most beautiful “blossoms” that Jesus has entrusted to my care (cf. Jn 21:15-17). By this I mean all of our brothers and sisters throughout the world who have been redeemed by Christ’s blood, none excluded. That is why I need to have all of you join me there. I need to feel your closeness, whether physical or spiritual; the important thing is that it come from the heart. In this way, I can arrange my bouquet of flowers, my “golden rose”. With all of us forming “one heart and soul” (cf. Acts 4:32), I will then entrust you to Our Lady, asking her to whisper to each one of you: “My Immaculate Heart will be your refuge and the path that leads you to God” (Apparition of June, 1917).

“With Mary, a pilgrim in hope and in peace”. That is the motto of our pilgrimage. It contains an entire programme

of conversion. I am happy to know that in anticipation of that blessed moment, the culmination of a century of blessed moments, you have been preparing yourselves by intense prayer. Prayer enlarges our hearts and makes them ready to receive God's gifts. I thank you for all the prayers and sacrifices that you offer daily for me. I need them, because I am a sinner among sinners, "a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips (Is 6:5). Prayer gives light to my eyes and enables me to see others as God sees them, and to love others as he loves them.

In his name, I will come among you and have the joy of sharing with everyone the Gospel of hope and peace. May the Lord bless you, and the Virgin Mother protect you!

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