
Lula Wants Pope to Show the World Brazil's Good Social Policies

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Brazilian President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva announced this morning during his weekly radio program Breakfast with the President that he will discuss the Church's social action when he meets with Pope Benedict XVI next Thursday, May 10. Lula, will also, he said, try to find ways to disseminate all over the world the "good public policies" accomplished in Brazil.

The Pope arrives in Brazil on Wednesday, May 9, and he will be received by Lula at the airport in São Paulo. But the president and the pontiff will only have a formal meeting the next day. On Friday, Brazil will have its first saint ever, Friar Galvão.

His intention says Lula is to "discuss with the Pope the social policies we are conducting in Brazil so that he, as the most important person in the Catholic church, may help to disseminate these good public policies to the world, where the Catholic church has an important role."

Pope Benedict XVI said Sunday, May 6, his trip to Brazil will be an effort to promote the Church's evangelization so that Latin America will more and more be "the continent of hope."

The Pope said at his Regina Caeli address in Saint Paul's square: "This is my first pastoral visit to Latin America and I am preparing myself spiritually to visit the continent where almost half the Catholics of the whole world, many of them young people, live."

"It is for this reason," he added, "that Latin America has been given the name 'continent of hope': It is a hope that has to do not only with the Church but with the whole of America and the entire world."

The Pope invited the faithful to pray for the May 9-14 "apostolic pilgrimage and, in particular, for the 5th General Conference of the Episcopate of Latin America and the Caribbean, so that all the Christians of those regions may see themselves as disciples and missionaries of Christ, the way, the truth and the life."

The Pontiff will open the conference, which begins next Sunday in the national shrine of Our Lady of Aparecida, in the Brazilian city of the same name, situated 170 kilometers from São Paulo.

Benedict XVI said that before the opening of the conference he will stop in the city of São Paulo to meet with the young people and bishops of Brazil and preside at the canonization of Frei Antônio de Sant'Anna Galvão.

"Many and multiple are the challenges of the present," the Pope said. "This is why it is important that Christians be formed to be a 'ferment' of good and a 'light' of holiness in our world.

Bzz, Mercopress