



GRAND MAGISTERIUM – VATICAN  
EQUESTRIAN ORDER OF  
THE HOLY SEPULCHRE OF JERUSALEM

*At the service of the living stones in the Holy Land*

## "Colombia, open your heart as the People of God"

The Lieutenant for Colombia comments on Pope Francis' visit



The Lieutenant for Colombia, Lady Grand Cross Adriana Mayol de Rojas, shares her reactions with us at the end of the Holy Father's Apostolic Visit to her country during which members of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre participated in various celebrations as part of the local Church.

### ***How did you actively take part in Pope Francis' visit, as members of the Order?***

Our participation began with a pilgrimage to the Virgin of Chiquinquirá, Patron of Colombia, to pray for the Holy Father's journey.

Following this, we attended the ceremony for the enthroning of the icon of the Virgin which was transferred from Chiquinquirá, the village in which it is revered, to the Primatial Cathedral of Bogotá.

On September 7 we then accompanied Pope Francis who prayed in front of this image. It was a moment of profound recollection in which we united our hearts to the Pope's intentions. Finally, we participated in the Eucharistic celebrations presided over by His Holiness in Bogotá and Medellín with members from other cities.

***Were they any particular words or gestures of the Holy Father that struck you deeply and which could, in your opinion, change the history of your nation?***

First of all, his simplicity, his strength demonstrated during the long days, his enthusiasm and cheerfulness that succeeded in overcoming the most optimistic estimates regarding public participation.

The words he addressed to young people really went straight to my heart, when he said, "How could you not be capable of changing this society and accomplishing all you decide to do! Do not be afraid of the future! Dare to dream big! "

Then in Villavicencio, the capital of a region heavily affected by violence ... There, in front of a crucifix destroyed in a guerrilla attack, he prayed thus: " Christ broken and without limbs is for us 'even more Christ.' He came to show us that hatred does not have the last word, that love is stronger than death and violence." Finally, after listening to the moving testimony of forgiveness from victims and perpetrators of violence, Pope Francis said, "Colombia, open your heart as the People of God and be reconciled. Fear neither the truth nor justice. "

***As a member of the Order, how do you feel called to serve in the local Church, especially to build peace?***

Recognizing the living faith of the Colombian people and our willingness to reconcile despite the painful and profound differences that have been generated by years of guerrilla war, is a precious experience. As an Order, we are called to give impulse to the social initiatives that are already being pursued with people in need and who have been forced to leave their homes because of the conflict. No less important is the call to spread the Pope's message of unity and reconciliation for the common good.

*(September 13, 2017)*