

APOSTOLIC JOURNEY OF HIS HOLINESS POPE FRANCIS TO CHILE AND PERU
(15-22 JANUARY 2018)

**MEETING WITH THE POPULATION
GREETING OF THE HOLY FATHER**

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[Link](#)

[...]

Speaking of these things, allow me to bring up another painful subject. We become accustomed to using the term "human trafficking". Upon arriving at Puerto Maldonado, at the airport I saw a sign that struck me: "Be on the watch for human trafficking". This is a sign of growing awareness. But in truth we should speak of slavery: slavery for work, sexual slavery, slavery for profit. It is painful to see how in this land, which is under the protection of the Mother of God, so many women are devalued, denigrated and exposed to endless violence. Violence cannot be seen as "normal". Violence against women cannot be treated as "normal", maintaining a culture of machismo blind to the leading role that women play in our communities. It is not right for us, brothers and sisters, to look the other way and let the dignity of so many women, especially young women, be trampled upon.

Many people have immigrated to Amazonia in search of housing, land and work. They come in search of a better future for themselves and their families. They abandon poor, yet worthy lives. Many of them, in the hope that certain jobs will bring an end to their precarious situations, are drawn by the promising allure of gold mining. But let us not forget that gold can turn into a false god which demands human sacrifices.

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