

# *Quito Welcomes Pope Francis to Ecuador*

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Quito, July 06 (teleSUR-RHC) Lining up early Sunday along the highway and avenues connecting Quito to its international airport, anxious and faithful Ecuadoreans waited to catch a glimpse at Pope Francis, the first pope to visit the country in 30 years.

"I am really hoping he heals me. I have lung cancer, but I am convinced that with his arrival, his blessing will heal me," said Carmen Carrion. She had been waiting next to the highway since 10 a.m. to watch Pope Francis to pass by.

The streets were filled with people waving flags and homemade signs to welcome this papal visit. Pope Francis touched Ecuadorean soil at 3 p.m., and was greeted by President Rafael Correa at the Mariscal Sucre Airport.

Carlos Echeverria, a member of the Ecuador Vespa Club, rode his Vespa with other members to the site where Pope Francis would pass. "He is well-intentioned. He is concerned about the environment, social justice, which is very important, and for redistribution," Echeverria said.

As the first Latin American pope, the messages of Pope Francis of solidarity with the poor and equality have resonated throughout the continent. More than 1 million people are expected to attend papal masses in both Quito and in Guayaquil.

In front of the apostolic nunciature, where Pope Francis stayed before leaving for Guayaquil early Monday, Sister of Dominican Congregation of Santa Catalina of Sena, Maria Estela Adrade Torre, stated, “we have been waiting for Pope Francis for an hour, and we are hoping he will give us his blessing, gives us peace, that we really need, not only Ecuadoreans, but the world, and that he brings us humility to open our hearts, especially to those in most need.”

As the “pope mobile” passed, songs and the joyful cheers of thousands welcomed Pope Francis to Ecuador, the first stop on his Latin American tour. Love, happiness and peace are in the prayers of many for this papal visit.

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