

# The Junior Observer

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A Bible Tale

## God Tells Ezekiel to Warn His People

Catholic News Service

**I**n the sky I saw a man sitting on a throne. His appearance was of fire and electricity and splendor. A vibrant rainbow outlined His figure in the clouds. This could only be the likeness of God in His glory. I fell to my knees and bowed my head.

Then a voice like thunder filled the air. “Son of man, stand up! I wish to speak to you.”

I felt a powerful force stand me back on my feet. I was trembling too much in fear to lift myself up. The voice spoke to me again. I did not know what was going to happen, so I tried to stand still and just listen.

“I am sending you to the Israelites, rebels who have rebelled against me. Hard of face and obstinate of heart are they.”

I could not help but be filled with amazement. Was this Yahweh,



### Q&A

What did Ezekiel see in the sky?

What did the Lord tell Ezekiel to do?

Read more in Ezekial 2

the Lord God, who was speaking to me in this way? Me, Ezekiel, son of Buzi, a priest of Israel? And if God wanted me to speak to Israel, why would they believe that God had chosen me?

The Lord must have been listening to my thoughts and doubts.

“You shall say to them, ‘Thus says the Lord God!’”

God was giving me the authority, rather He was ordering me, to

speak in His name. But I still wondered if my people would listen. Would they believe me?

Again the Lord spoke to reassure my fears.

“Whether they heed you or resist, for they are a rebellious house, they will know a prophet has been among them.”

Me, a prophet?

“Neither fear their words nor be dismayed at their looks, for they

are a rebellious house. Speak my words to them whether they heed or resist, whether they contradict you or reject you.”

But the Lord had some words that were meant directly and only for me.

“As for you ... “

I know I must have gasped in a moment of fear, but the Lord ignored my reaction.

“As for you, obey me when I speak to you: Be not rebellious like this house of rebellion, but open your mouth and eat what I give to you.”

I was wondering what the Lord meant by that when a hand appeared in the air in front of me. It was holding a scroll. The scroll unrolled, and I could see it was covered with writing. So I ate the scroll, and it tasted like honey.



Pope Francis walks with children of prisoners in Santa Cruz, Bolivia, July 10. (CNS photos/Paul Haring)



Children hold posters as they wait to see Pope Francis near his meeting with clergy, religious men and women, and seminarians at the El Quinche National Marian Shrine in Quito, Ecuador, July 8.

## Pope Francis Visits South America

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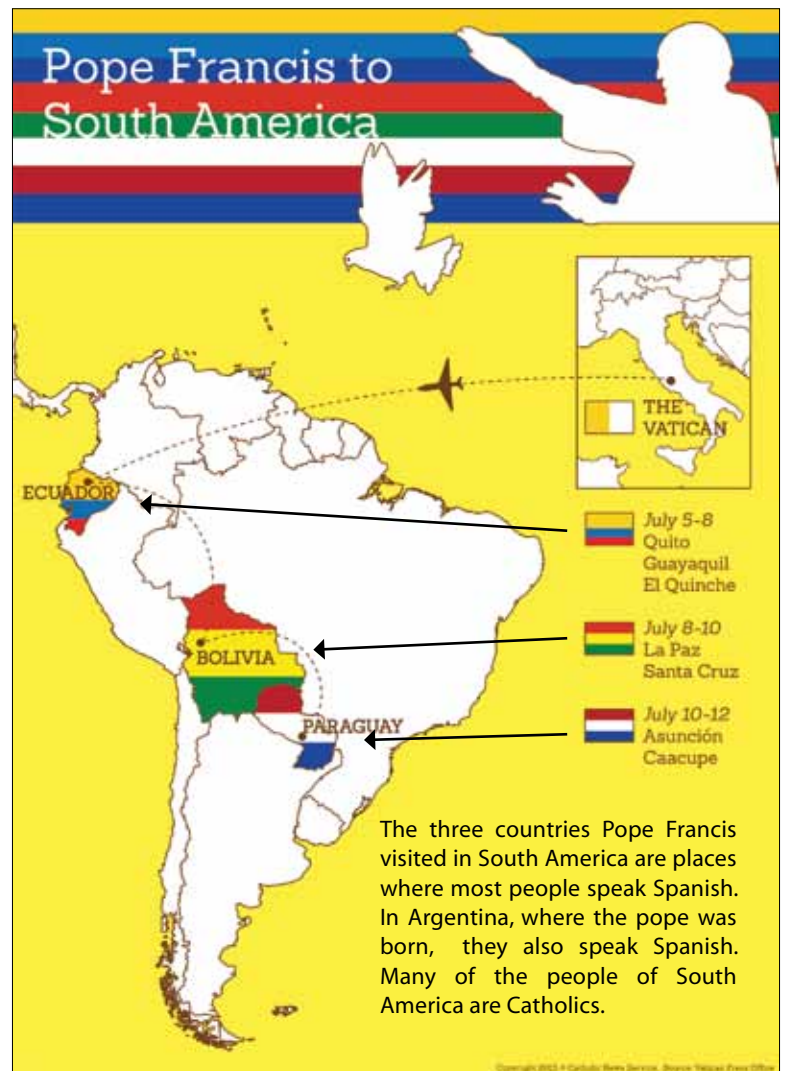
**P**ope Francis visited three countries in South America this month — Ecuador, Bolivia and Paraguay.

In each country, children were waiting to see him and some were able to meet him.

In Paraguay, at “Ninos de Acosta Nu” general pediatric hospital, Pope Francis greeted patients and their families July 11 before traveling to the Marian shrine of Caacupe to celebrate Mass. He visited various wards and spoke privately with children and parents.

On July 12 he visited Banado Norte, a poor neighborhood near the Paraguay River. Huge posters of letters and drawings from about 2,500 children from schools, welcomed him, and showed the problems of their

A boy holds a statue of Mary as he waits for Pope Francis’ arrival to meet with people of the Banado Norte, a poor neighborhood in Asuncion, Paraguay, July 12.



The three countries Pope Francis visited in South America are places where most people speak Spanish. In Argentina, where the pope was born, they also speak Spanish. Many of the people of South America are Catholics.

families and neighborhoods — flooding, drugs, crime, sickness, separation — and asked his blessing. Several children said they were afraid their families might be forced to move.

On July 10 he stopped at a prison in Paraguay that has an area called *Amanecer*, the Spanish word for dawn, where children can live with their mothers until they are about 4-years-old. He also visited a prison in Bolivia.

At each stop Pope Francis prayed for children and families. In September, Pope Francis will visit the United States and Cuba.