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The Prelate's First Pastoral Visit to Croatia

Bishop Javier Echevarría visited Zagreb, Croatia, for three days at the end of August. A little over a year ago the first center of Opus Dei opened there.

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While in Zagreb, the Prelate took part in several gatherings with families, members of Opus Dei and cooperators. The largest took place on August 30 in the Panorama Hotel;

about 500 people were present. Bishop Echevarría opened the get-together by thanking the Croatians for their fidelity to the Gospel in spite of the persecution they suffered in the period prior to the recovery of their freedom. In response to a question, he encouraged those present to forgive with all their heart and strive to heal the wounds opened by the last war.

While in the city, the Prelate met with the Cardinal Archbishop of Zagreb, Most Rev. Josip Bozanić, and with the Nuncio of the Holy See, Bishop Francisco Javier Lozano.

Other memorable events on his schedule included prayer in the Cathedral before the tomb of Bl. Aloysius Stepinać and at Remete, a Marian shrine conducted by the Congregation of Pauline religious.

At the request of young people who wanted to greet the Prelate, he met

with them in a center of Opus Dei. He encouraged them to be faithful to the Christian vocation and to imitate the Holy Father's dedication to the Church: "You young people are the future, the hope of the Church. Accept your vocation with seriousness and optimism," he said.

At the conclusion of his visit to Croatia, Bishop Echevarría went to the Marian shrine of Torreciudad in Spain to take part in its annual Marian Family Day.