



# The Holy See

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***LETTER OF HIS HOLINESS BENEDICT XVI  
TO CARDINAL GIACOMO BIFFI  
AT THE CONCLUSION OF THE ANNUAL  
LENTEN SPIRITUAL EXERCISES***

*To His Eminence Cardinal Giacomo Biffi  
Archbishop emeritus of Bologna*

While the Spiritual Exercises come to a successful conclusion, with this Message I wish to express to you, dear Brother, my cordial thanks and deep appreciation for the service you have rendered to me and to my Collaborators in the Roman Curia, guiding us with your stimulating meditations.

With that richness and depth of thought well known to us, you have impelled us to turn our mind and heart toward "the things that are above" (Col 3: 1-2), as was suggested by the theme - of Pauline inspiration - for these days of prayer and reflection.

Starting with the two liturgical invitations which, so to speak, initiate the Lenten journey: "Repent and believe in the Gospel"; "Remember that you are dust and to dust you shall return", you helped us to meditate on the lordship of Christ over the cosmos and history, on his blessed Passion, on the mystery of the Church and on the Eucharist, as well as on the relationship of these supernatural realities with the world.

To complete and enhance the theological and spiritual reflections of each day, you wisely presented certain figures as "witnesses" who, in various ways and with different styles, guided and sustained us on our journey toward Christ, fullness of life for every person and for the entire universe.

How can I thank you, dear Cardinal, for such a precious gift? The Lord alone knows and can reward you as you deserve. On my part and, I am certain, also on the part of those who have benefited from your meditations, I wish to assure you of our fervent remembrance in prayer for you yourself and for the intentions dearest to your heart.

And to make this bond of prayer stronger and more effective, I entrust it to the heavenly intercession of Mary Most Holy. "May the soul of Mary be in everyone": I, in turn, would like to address this beautiful exhortation with which, echoing St Ambrose, you brought the Exercises to culmination, as a heartfelt wish to you, dear Brother, while I wholeheartedly renew my Apostolic Blessing and extend it to all your loved ones.

*From the Vatican, 3 March 2007*

**JOHN PAUL II**

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