



The Holy See

MEMORY OF THE WITNESSES TO THE FAITH
WHO DIED DURING THE 20th CENTURY

***ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS BENEDICT XVI
AT THE CONCLUSION OF THE LITURGY OF THE WORD***

*Basilica of St Bartholomew on Tiber Island, Rome
Monday, 7 April 2008*

At the end of the prayer service in memory of the witnesses to the faith in recent times, I gladly greet you all, especially those who have followed the liturgy on screens in the square or via radio or television link-up. On the Community's 25th anniversary, when the Servant of God John Paul II came to Santa Maria in Trastevere, he entrusted this Basilica of St Bartholomew to the Community of Sant'Egidio, and in the year 2000 established that the new martyrs should be commemorated here.

Dear friends of the Sant'Egidio Community, you took your first steps precisely here in Rome in the difficult years that followed 1968. As sons of this Church which presides in charity, you then spread your charism to many other parts of the world. The Word of God, love for the Church, special love for the poor and the communication of the Gospel have been the stars that guided you while you witnessed, under different skies, to the one message of Christ. I thank you for your apostolic work; I thank you for your attention to the least and for your quest for peace, which is a characteristic of your Community. May the example of the martyrs whom we have recalled guide your footsteps so that you may be true friends of God and authentic friends of humanity. And do not fear the difficulties and suffering that this missionary action entails: they are included in the "logic" of the courageous witness of Christian love.

Lastly, I would like to address to you and through you to all your Communities scattered across the world, my most cordial good wishes for the 40th anniversary of your foundation. I extend my greeting to the sick, the health-care personnel, the Religious and the volunteers of the adjacent

Fatebenefratelli Hospital of Tiber Island. I assure my remembrance in prayer to each and every one, while, invoking the Blessed Virgin's maternal protection, I impart to all the Apostolic Blessing.

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