



The Holy See

***ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS BENEDICT XVI
TO THE STAFF OF THE PONTIFICAL VILLAS
OF CASTEL GANDOLFO***

*Papal Summer Residence, Castel Gandolfo
Wednesday, 29 September 2010*

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Before taking my leave of Castel Gandolfo at the end of my summer stay, I am pleased to receive you on this farewell visit, which gives me the opportunity to express to each one of you my deep gratitude for your work and, in particular, to congratulate you on the spirit of service that inspires you.

I thank Dr Saverio Petrillo, the Director, for his kind words and for the sentiments he has expressed to me on behalf of you all. I am glad on this occasion to renew the expression of my appreciation of the competence and attention that you, dear Director, together with all the personnel, devote to the care of the Palace and of the Pontifical Villas. May the Lord reward each one with an abundance of heavenly gifts and keep you and your families. I thank you all because this summer too you have accompanied me with prayers and your daily work. You have always been close to me and I am grateful to you for this.

Continue, dear friends, to offer the daily witness of your faith, especially by listening in docility to the Word of God. Today, in the Liturgy, we celebrate three sublime Messengers of this word that illumines, guides, defends, comforts and helps: the Holy Archangels Michael, Gabriel and Raphael, sent by God with specific missions at special moments in the history of salvation. Every Christian is called to receive and to live every day, with simplicity and joy, the Word of truth that the Lord has communicated to us. Down the centuries, the Church has known splendid figures, faithful disciples of Christ, who diligently and lovingly drew nourishment from Sacred Scripture, placing deep trust in it. Tomorrow we shall commemorate St Jerome, a Father of the Church, who made the Bible the centre of his life: he translated it into Latin and commented on it in his works.

This eminent Doctor of the Church warned that "ignorance of the Scriptures is ignorance of Christ" (*Commentary on Isaiah*, Prologue). It is therefore fundamental that every Christian live in touch and in dialogue with the Word of God given to us in Sacred Scripture, not reading it as a Word of the past but rather as a living Word that is addressed to us today and calls us into question.

Dear friends, I assure you of my constant remembrance in prayer, so that each one may know and assimilate ever more deeply the Word of God, an incentive and a source of Christian life for all situations and for every person. The Blessed Virgin is a model of this obedient listening: learn from her! May the Lord grant you days that are happy and holy; may the Holy Spirit enrich your families with his gifts.

And now, as a sign of friendship, I cordially impart a special Apostolic Blessing to each one of you, and to your loved ones.

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