



The Holy See

**MESSAGE OF HIS HOLINESS BENEDICT XVI
TO HIS HOLINESS ALEXY II
PATRIARCH OF MOSCOW AND ALL RUSSIA**

To His Holiness

Alexy II

Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia

The visit of His Eminence Cardinal Crescenzo Sepe, Archbishop of Naples, offers me the occasion to extend to Your Holiness my cordial and fraternal greetings in the Lord. I have a deep affection for all the Orthodox brethren, and I am particularly close to them in these most recent days when conflict has caused significant suffering to peoples so dear to me. I never cease to offer daily prayers for peace, asking the Lord that the appeals of Your Holiness to resolve all hostility for the good of the nations may be heeded. Faith in our Lord Jesus Christ is a bond that unites hearts in a profound way and invites us all to strengthen our commitment to manifest to the world a shared witness of living together respectfully and peacefully.

Our times, marked so often by conflict and grief, make it even more necessary to hasten the journey toward the full unity of all the disciples of Christ, so that the joyous message of salvation may be spread to all humanity.

Invoking upon Your Holiness the maternal protection of Mary, Mother of God, that she may preserve you in full health and assist you in your daily ministry, I renew to you the assurance of my heartfelt fraternal regard.

From the Vatican, 22 September 2008

BENEDICTVS PP. XVI
