



The Holy See

ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS BENEDICT XVI TO THE VARIOUS COMMUNITIES OF CASTEL GANDOLFO

Monday, 26 September 2005

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

My stay here in Castel Gandolfo is drawing to a close. Before I return to the Vatican, I should like to express my gratitude to those who have welcomed me in these summer months and have done their utmost to assure me a peaceful stay. I am therefore happy to meet you and I greet you all with affection.

I would first like to address a cordial greeting to the Christian community of Castel Gandolfo and to the entire Diocese of Albano, which is celebrating its Diocesan Congress in these very days. I greet in particular Bishop Marcello Semeraro, the Parish Priest of Castel Gandolfo and the men's and women's religious communities. I hope that all of you will always work together to spread the love and joy of Christ everywhere.

I then greet the Mayor, thanking him for the courtesy and the kind sentiments he has expressed to me also on behalf of the Administration and the Municipal Council.

I extend my greeting to the city community, which I have felt so close to me in this period. It is always generous to pilgrims: as in recent years with our beloved John Paul II, this summer too they have come in large numbers to visit the Pope. The traditional hospitality of the inhabitants of Castel Gandolfo is well known. Thank you!

I also address a grateful thought to the doctors and to the operators of the various Services of the Governorate. I then greet the officials and agents of the Italian Police Forces, who have guaranteed to my collaborators and myself, in collaboration with the Gendarmerie of the Vatican and the Pontifical Swiss Guard, a safe and tranquil stay in this beautiful spot. I express my esteem

and appreciation to each one, and add my affectionate remembrance of their families and loved ones.

Dear friends, before taking leave of you, I assure you that I will continue to pray the Lord to bless you, your relatives, your work, your projects and the expectations of the whole community of Castel Gandolfo. I invoke the motherly protection of Mary upon each one of you.

With these sentiments, I impart my Apostolic Blessing as a sign of my constant benevolence to you and to all those whom you represent.

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