



The Holy See

CONFERRAL UPON THE HOLY FATHER
OF THE HONORARY CITIZENSHIP OF INTROD, AOSTA
ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS BENEDICT XVI

Wednesday, 16 December 2009

*Mr President of the Region,
Mr Mayor, Mr Mayors,
Reverend Parish Priest,
Municipal Councillors,
Ladies and Gentlemen,*

It is a cause of great joy to me to receive honorary citizenship of the Commune of Introd, where I have been able to spend unforgettable periods of rest, surrounded by the splendid Alpine panorama that favours the encounter with the Creator and restores the spirit. In addressing my cordial greeting to each one of you, I would like to thank in particular the President of the Autonomous Region of the Valle d'Aosta, Mr Augusto Rollandin, and the Mayor of Introd, Mr Osvaldo Naudin, for the courteous words they have wished to address to me on behalf of those present and of all those whom they represent.

I consider the decision of the Municipal Council of Introd, which has wished to enrol me among the community's honorary citizens, as a sign of affection of all the *Introleins* and inhabitants of the entire Valley of Aosta who have always given me a warm and cordial welcome that is at the same time discreet and respectful of my need for rest. I can now rightly say that I am at home in Introd, this delightful Alpine place to which I am bound by happy and grateful memories and a sentiment of special spiritual closeness.

At this moment, so many memories flood my mind, especially the *chalet* surrounded by woods, that is a place of spiritual repose, with its splendid view and a sign of affection of the population, of the Mayor and of all of you. I could recount many more things. We have spoken in these days of

what they do with the *chalet* in winter. I am glad to know that it is well looked after and protected. I am happy to learn from the words of Mr Mayor that my presence in the Aosta Valley, and earlier still that of my beloved Predecessor [John Paul II](#), has encouraged the growth in the faith of those people so dear to me, and rich in Christian traditions and so many signs of religious vitality. It is likewise known to me that under the diligent guidance of her Pastor, dear Bishop Giuseppe Anfossi, the Church in the Valley of Aosta never tires of grafting onto the ancient trunk of this spiritual patrimony, the ever new "news" of Jesus, the Word of God, who became man to offer to human beings the joy of living, already on this earth, the exalting experience of being beloved children of God. This task appears particularly urgent in a society that nourishes illusions and false hopes, especially in the new generations, but which the Lord, today too, calls to transform itself into a "family" of God's children, who live with "one heart and soul" (Acts 4: 32) to bear witness to love for life and for the poor.

Dear friends, as I renew to you my sentiments of affection and gratitude, I invoke God's Blessing upon you, upon your families and upon the entire Valle d'Aosta Region. May the Lord continue to protect your Communities and your Region and help it to build a future which, putting God first, will be increasingly just, supportive and full of hope!

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