



## The Holy See

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**LETTER OF HIS HOLINESS BENEDICT XVI  
TO H.E. MSGR. IOAN ROBU,  
METROPOLITAN ARCHBISHOP OF BUCHAREST  
ON THE TENTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE VISIT  
OF THE SERVANT OF GOD JOHN PAUL II TO ROMANIA  
(MAY 7-9, 1999)**

*To my Venerable Brother  
Metropolitan Archbishop Ioan Robu  
of Bucharest*

I rejoiced to learn that the Roman Catholic Church in Romania, the Romanian Orthodox Church and the Romanian State have wished to commemorate together the 10th anniversary of the memorable [Visit to Romania of the Servant of God John Paul II](#) who went there determined "to strengthen those ties between Romania and the Holy See which were so important for the history of Christianity in the region" ([Arrival Ceremony](#), Baneasa Airport, Bucharest, 7 May 1999), and to "pay homage to the Romanian people and to their Christian roots" ([General Audience](#), 12 May 1999).

It therefore gives me great pleasure to extend my cordial greeting to all those who will be taking part in this important event. It is an interesting initiative that unites the Catholic and Orthodox faithful of this country which - because of its geographical location and its long history, its culture and its tradition - keeps a record of its special ecumenical vocation, as it were, impressed in its roots. The wish that I warmly express is that believers in Christ may not only keep alive the memory of those unforgettable days but also, gathering the teachings of my venerable Predecessor [John Paul II](#), that they may all strive to find together courageous ways to face with trust the great challenges of our time. I am thinking especially of the defence of human life in all its phases, of the safeguard of the family, of respect for creation and of promotion of the common good. In addition, making my own the wishes of beloved Pope John Paul II, I ask you to pray that full fraternal communion among all Christians in both the West and the East may be achieved as soon as possible: "the Divine Master prayed for this unity, enlivened by love, in the Upper Room

on the eve of his Passion and death" (*Holy Mass*, Podul Izvor Park, Bucharest, 9 May 1999).

With these sentiments I assure you of my remembrance in prayer and impart my Blessing to you, venerable Brother, to all those present here and to the entire Christian community in Romania. I also impart a warm greeting and Blessing to the beloved Orthodox Patriarch and to all the members of that noble Church.

*From the Vatican, 6 May 2009.*

**BENEDICT XVI**

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