



The Holy See

MESSAGE OF CONDOLENCE OF HIS HOLINESS BENEDICT XVI FOR THE DEATH OF SERBIAN ORTHODOX PATRIARCH PAVLE

To His Eminence

Amfilohije

Archbishop of Cetinje

Metropolitan of Montenegro,

Locum Tenens of the Patriarchal Throne Holy Synod

of the Serbian Orthodox Church

I received the sorrowful news that the Lord has called to himself His Holiness Pavle, Patriarch of the Serbian Orthodox Church. I would like to offer to you, to the Holy Synod and to all the Members of the Church my profound condolences, assuring you of my union in prayer with all who are mourning their Father and Pastor. In his long life at the service of the Gospel, the late Patriarch bore a witness of faith and spiritual fortitude also in particularly difficult moments, marked by conflicts and wars.

I ask the Lord to obtain that his example may be of comfort to the hearts of his faithful and to so many other people of good will who, encouraged by his perseverance, strive to live the Christian faith to the full and to serve zealously the great cause of reconciliation and peace. I recall with gratitude the generous and warm welcome that His Holiness Pavle gave the Members of the Joint International Commission for Theological Dialogue Between the Catholic Church and the Orthodox Church as a whole during the plenary meeting in September 2006 in Belgrade. There were also many other fraternal gestures to the Catholic Church and meetings of Catholics and Orthodox that took place with his Blessing. May the sorrow at Patriarch Pavle's passing be transformed into sure hope in his "birth in Heaven", and may his memory continue to inspire vigorous spiritual growth in the people whom he served with dedication and generosity. May his memory also be an invitation to all to continue on the way of dialogue and the search for full communion among all Christ's disciples.

I would like further to express the wish that the Lord may accompany the Holy Synod's action in this period of transition. With affection in the Lord,

From the Vatican, 16 November 2009

BENEDICT PP. XVI

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