



The Holy See

**MESSAGE OF HIS HOLINESS BENEDICT XVI
TO BRAZILIAN BISHOPS
FOR THE ANNUAL BROTHERHOOD CAMPAIGN**

*To my Venerable Brother
Archbishop Geraldo Lyrio Rocha
of Mariana (MG)
President of the CNBB*

With Ash Wednesday, the favourable season for salvation which is Lent returns with its insistent call: "Be reconciled to God" (2 Cor 5: 20), a cry that must resound on the lips of those who proclaim the word of God: "I will charge my ministers to proclaim to sinners that I am ever ready to welcome them, that my mercy is infinite" (*Letter for the Inauguration of the Year for Priests, 16 June 2009*). These divine sentiments were entrusted to the holy Curé d'Ars who in his time was able to transform the hearts and lives of so many people because he enabled them to experience the Lord's merciful love.

I wish the same success to the Churches and Ecclesial Communities in Brazil which this year have decided to join forces to reconcile people with God, helping them to free themselves from the slavery of money. In fact, as the ecumenical *Brotherhood Campaign 2010* recalls, citing Jesus' words, "You cannot serve God and Mammon". Rejoicing in this proposal of conversion, I recall that the "origin" of enslavement to money and injustice "lies in the human heart, where the seeds are found of a mysterious cooperation with evil" (*Message for Lent 2010*, 30 October 2009). I therefore encourage you to persevere in witnessing to the love of God, of the Son of God who was made man, of the man who received from the grace of God's life, of the one God who can satisfy people's hearts, because "just as man needs bread, so does man have even more need of God" (*ibid.*). In this way you will succeed in facing the "internal deserts" of which I spoke at the beginning of my Petrine ministry, inviting the whole Church "to set out to lead people out of the desert, towards the place of life, towards friendship with the Son of God, towards the One who gives us life, and life in abundance... the purpose of our lives is to reveal God to men. And only where God is seen does life truly begin" (*Homily for the inauguration of the Petrine Ministry, 24*

April 2005). "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks" (Mt 12: 34), you can know your heart from your words. "Be reconciled to God" so that your words may serve more than anything else to speak of God and to God.

As I implore the greatest Blessings from God upon the ecumenical *Brotherhood Campaign 2010*, I take this opportunity to convey to my brothers and sisters and friends in Brazil my cordial greetings together with my best wishes for every good in Jesus Christ, the one Saviour of all.

From the Vatican, 8 February 2010

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