



The Holy See

**MESSAGE OF GREETINGS OF HIS HOLINESS BENEDICT XVI
TO RABBI ELIO TOAFF
ON THE OCCASION OF HIS 95th BIRTHDAY**

*To the Most Distinguished
Rabbi emeritus Rav Elio TOAFF*

*The Lord is my shepherd I shall not want...
Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,
I fear no evil, for you are with me
(Psalm 23)*

On the happy occasion of your 95th birthday I would like to join all those who are rejoicing with you for the gifts that the mercy of Almighty God has bestowed upon you in a long life full of goodness.

With the words of the Psalm, I am thinking of how the Lord has strengthened your soul, guiding you on the right path even through the darkest valley, at the time of the persecution and extermination of the Jewish People.

The Lord, in his mysterious plans, has desired you to have a unique experience of his salvation, thereby becoming a sign of hope for the rebirth of many of your brothers and sisters.

I am especially keen to recall your commitment to promoting fraternal relations between Catholics and Jews, and the sincere friendship that bound you to my venerable Predecessor, Pope [John Paul II](#).

My sincerest wish is that the final words of the same Psalm may be fulfilled for you: "Goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord for

ever". Shalom!

From the Vatican, 3 May 2010

BENEDICTUS PP. XVI

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