



The Holy See

**MESSAGE OF HIS HOLINESS BENEDICT XVI
FOR THE 25th ANNIVERSARY
OF THE RELIGIOUS SUMMIT ON MOUNT HIEIZAN (JAPAN)**

*The Venerable Kojun HANDA
256th TendaiZasu
Supreme Priest of the Tendai Buddhist Denomination*

I am pleased to greet you and the religious leaders gathered for the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Religious Summit on Mount Hiei, in the spirit of the 1986 historic meeting in Assisi promoted by my predecessor Blessed John Paul II. The commitment to the cause of peace by religious leaders is of the greatest importance and I am happy to learn that, thanks to your efforts, the Summit on Mount Hiei has become a major annual event that contributes effectively to dialogue between people of different beliefs.

I am confident that the work of the Summit and the Symposium studying the response of religious leaders to natural disasters will lead to greater solidarity and mutual help. According to the Christian perspective, the love given to those who suffer is a reflection of the divine charity of God who so loved the world that he sent his only Son Jesus Christ. In this sense, my mind turns to the earthquake and tsunami in north-east Japan last year and the harrowing consequences for the whole nation. It was heartening to learn of the effective role of religious leaders in offering hope and support, as well as counsel and solace, to all those suffering. The tragic event also shows how people of different beliefs can cooperate with one another for the good of the human person.

With these sentiments, and as a pledge of goodwill and friendship, upon all gathered I invoke an abundance of divine blessings.

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