



The Holy See

**VIDEO MESSAGE OF HIS HOLINESS POPE BENEDICT XVI
TO THE CATHOLIC CHURCH OF CAMBODIA
ON THE OCCASION OF THE NATIONAL CONFERENCE
OF THE SECOND VATICAN COUNCIL
[PHNOM PENH, 5-7 JANUARY 2013]**

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Cambodia

It is with great pleasure that I join you in prayer these days and through the heart, send you warm greetings while you gather around your pastors to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the opening of the Second Vatican Council and the twentieth anniversary of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*. I hope that the Cambodian language translation of the conciliar documents and the *Catechism* that you will receive on this occasion will allow you to better understand the teaching of the Church and grow in faith.

In this *Year of Faith*, I invite you to keep your eyes fixed on the person of Jesus Christ who is the origin and end of our faith (cf. Heb 12: 2) and to reiterate the Good News to the world today. In Him, the examples of faith that have marked our history, find their full light. Also, remembering the period of troubles that precipitated your country in the darkness, I would like to emphasize the faith, courage and perseverance of your pastors and of your Christian brothers and sisters, those so many who have died, is a noble testimony to the truth of the Gospel. And this testimony has become a priceless spiritual strength to rebuild the church community in your country. Today, many catechumens and adult baptisms show your dynamism and is a happy sign of the active presence of God in you.

Dear brothers and sisters, after the Apostle Paul, I urge you to "keep the unity of the Spirit by the bond of peace" (Eph 4, 3). Be assured of the prayers of your brothers and sisters whose blood flowed in the rice field! Be a leaven in the dough of your society, witnessing to the love of Christ for all, building bonds of brotherhood with members of other religious traditions, and walking on the paths of justice and mercy.

Dear young people, my friends who have been baptized in these recent years, do not forget that the Church is your family; she is counting on you to witness the life and the love that you have found in Jesus. I pray for you and I invite you to be generous disciples of Christ.

Cambodian seminarians, priests and religious, you are a sign of the seeds of the Church that is building up herself. You have offered your life and your prayers are a source of hope. May they be also an invitation to other young people to give their lives as priests and religious in the heart of God.

Missionaries, religious, consecrated laity from five continents, be the beautiful sign of ecclesial communion around your pastors so that your brotherhood in the diversity of your charismas may lead many people you serve and love with zeal to meet Jesus Christ.

And all of you, who seek God, persevere and be sure that Christ loves you and offers you His peace!

Beloved brothers and sisters, pastors and faithful of Cambodia, the Virgin Mary, Our Lady of the Mekong, in her humility and fidelity to the will of the Lord, enlighten you throughout this Year of Faith. Be sure that I keep you in my prayers and in the bottom of my heart I convey you all an affectionate Apostolic Blessing!

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