



The Holy See

***MESSAGE OF HIS HOLINESS BENEDICT XVI
TO THE MOST REVEREND AND RIGHT HONOURABLE JUSTIN WELBY
ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY
ON THE OCCASION OF THE CONFIRMATION OF ELECTION***

To the Most Reverend and Right Honourable
Justin Welby
Archbishop of Canterbury

In our prayers for you we always thank God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, for we have heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of the love that you have for all the saints, because of the hope laid up for you in heaven (*Col 1:3*)

With these words of Saint Paul, I greet you joyfully in the name of the Lord Jesus, "whom God made our wisdom, our righteousness and sanctification and redemption" (*1 Cor 1:30*), and I offer you my prayerful good wishes on the occasion of your installation as Archbishop of Canterbury.

You take up your office at a time when the Christian faith is being called into question in many parts of the Western world by those who claim that religion is a private matter, with no contribution to offer to public debate. Ministers of the Gospel today have to respond to a widespread deafness to the music of faith, and a general weariness that shuns the demands of discipleship. Yet the hunger for God, even if unrecognized, is ever-present in our society, and the preacher's task, as a messenger of hope, is to speak the truth with love, shedding the light of Christ into the darkness of people's lives. May your apostolate yield a rich harvest and may it open the eyes and ears of many to the life-giving message of the Gospel.

Let us give thanks to God that the bonds of affection between Catholics and Anglicans have become firmly established in recent decades, through dialogue and collaboration, as well as personal meetings between our respective predecessors. It is greatly to be hoped that we will continue to build upon that important legacy. The disappointments that have been encountered

and the challenges that remain on our journey towards full communion are well known, but there have also been signs of hope. Recognizing that our unity will arise only as a gift from the Lord, let us entrust ourselves to his Holy Spirit, as we renew our determination to seek genuine unity in faith and to engage more profoundly in common witness and mission.

With sentiments of fraternal regard, I assure you of my prayers as you take up your new responsibilities. Whatever challenges you encounter, may the Lord grant you strength and wisdom, and may the Holy Spirit guide you in all that you undertake in his name.

From the Vatican, 4 February 2013

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