



The Holy See

**ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS BENEDICT XVI
TO THE MEMBERS OF THE "CIRCOLO SAN PIETRO"**

Thursday, 7 July 2005

Dear Friends,

I am happy to welcome you and I offer you a warm greeting. I extend my cordial thoughts to your relatives and to all who cooperate with you in the various activities of the *Circolo San Pietro*. I greet in particular Marquis Marcello Sacchetti, your President, whom I thank for his kind words on your behalf, and Mons. Franco Camaldo, your recently-appointed General Chaplain.

The mission you carry out with admirable dedication is invaluable. In addition to your liturgical service, you take the trouble to meet the needs of the poor and to bring relief to the sick and the suffering. By so doing you imitate the "Good Samaritan" and witness in practice to the missionary enthusiasm and evangelical love that must distinguish every authentic disciple of Christ.

You have come here today, as you do each year, to present the Peter's Pence offering to the Pope, yet another sign of your generous openness to the brothers and sisters in difficulty.

At the same time, it is a significant participation in the efforts of the Apostolic See to respond to the increasing number of emergencies in the Church, especially in the poorest nations.

Dear brothers and sisters, this is my first meeting with you since God called me to carry out the Petrine Ministry in the Church. For some time, however, I have been well acquainted with your service, motivated by convinced fidelity and docile attachment to the Successor of Peter.

I ask you to accompany me first of all with your prayers. Make prayer the daily nourishment of your lives, with regular moments for meditation on and listening to the Word of God, and taking part actively in Holy Mass. It is important that we centre Christian life on the Eucharist. This is what we

are invited to do by the Year of the Eucharist which, through the desire of my beloved Predecessor, the Servant of God John Paul II, is being celebrated in every Ecclesial Community.

Indeed, we must never forget that the secret of the effectiveness of all our projects is Christ and that our lives must be penetrated by his renewing action. Beneath his eyes we must place all the world's expectations and needs; let us present in particular to Jesus, whom we adore in the Eucharist, the sufferings of the sick whom you visit, the loneliness of the young and elderly persons whom you meet, and the fears, hopes and prospects of the whole of life.

And thus, with this inner attitude, it will be easier for you to fulfil your Christian vocation and to meet the needs of all who live in conditions of hardship or neglect, witnessing among them to Christ's comforting presence.

Dear friends, in expressing to you my appreciation for the service you render to the Church, I entrust you together with your families to the heavenly protection of the Virgin Mary and your Holy Patrons. For my part, I assure you that I will pray for those of you present here, for all who support you in your various initiatives and for those whom you encounter in your apostolate, as I impart to you all with affection a special Apostolic Blessing.

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