



The Holy See

**ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS BENEDICT XVI
TO MEMBERS OF THE "PRO PETRI SEDE"
AND "ETRENNES PONTIFICALES" ASSOCIATIONS**

Hall of Popes

Monday, 30 October 2006

Dear Friends,

I welcome you with joy, you who have come to Rome to demonstrate especially at this moment your attachment to the Apostolic See.

Your innate sense of ecclesial communion is expressed each year through a generous gesture of solidarity, destined to help our most deprived brethren.

Already in the time of the Apostles, the members of the young Christian community "had all things in common" (cf. Acts 2: 44-45), and St Paul was concerned to organize in each of the communities he founded this joint collection to help the other Churches (cf. I Cor 16: 1).

As I recalled in the Encyclical *Deus Caritas Est*: "For the Church, charity is not a kind of welfare activity which could equally well be left to others, but is a part of her nature, an indispensable expression of her very being" (n. 25). And I added: "The Church is God's family in the world. In this family no one ought to go without the necessities of life" (*ibid.*).

You are aware of the immense need for solidarity so that the fundamental dignity of our brethren is respected and that they may be fed, housed and educated. Each year, you generously respond by offering the Pope all that you have collected.

Please accept the deep gratitude of all the Christian communities which your gifts will help to assist so that they may always be at the service of the mission, proclaiming the Word of Life,

offering the sacraments of salvation and putting Christ's love into practice.

As I entrust you and your families to the benevolent and maternal intercession of Our Lady of the Rosary, Mother of God, I warmly impart a special Apostolic Blessing to you, which I extend to all the members of both your Associations and to their loved ones.

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