



# The Holy See

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VISIT TO THE "GIFT OF MARY" HOUSE CONDUCTED  
BY THE MISSIONARIES OF CHARITY IN THE VATICAN

***ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS BENEDICT XVI  
AT THE CONCLUSION OF HIS VISIT***

*Friday, 4 January 2008*

*Dear Sisters and Dear Brothers,*

I greet you with affection and I thank you for your warm welcome. Please convey my most cordial greeting to Sr Nirmala and assure her of my prayers for you and for the Congregation. I am happy to meet together the Superior Generals of the two male branches of the family founded by [Bl. Mother Teresa](#), the Missionaries of Charity Fathers and the Missionaries of Charity Contemplative Brothers. I also greet with warm cordiality the lay collaborators and guests present here, extending my appreciation to all those who offer their service in this place to ensure that the guests may feel as though they were at home. All together, you form a chain of Christian charity without which this House, like any voluntary work, could neither exist nor continue to serve so many forms of hardship and need. I therefore express my gratitude and encouragement to each and every one of you, for I know that all you do here for every brother and sister, you do for Christ himself.

The Visit I wanted to make today comes in continuation with the numerous Visits of my beloved Predecessor, the Servant of God John Paul II. He was very eager to have this House to welcome the poorest of the poor precisely here where the centre of the Church is located, beside Peter who served, followed and loved the Lord Jesus. Our Meeting is taking place almost 20 years after the construction and inauguration of this Home within the Leonine Walls. Indeed, it was on 21 May 1988 that beloved John Paul II inaugurated this "Gift of Mary". How many gestures of sharing, of concrete charity, have been made in these years within these walls! They are a sign and an example for Christian communities so that they may pledge to be communities that are always welcoming and open.

At the beginning of the new year, the beautiful name of this House, "Gift of Mary", invites us to make a tireless gift of our lives. May the Virgin Mary, who offered the whole of herself to the Almighty and was filled with every Grace and Blessing with the coming of the Son of God, teach us to make our existence a daily gift to God the Father at the service of our brethren as we listen to his Word and his will. And just as the holy Magi came from afar to adore the Messiah-King, may you too go forth on the highways of the world, dear brothers and sisters, following Mother Teresa's example, always witnessing joyfully to the love of Jesus, especially for the least and for the poor, and may your Blessed Foundress accompany and protect you from Heaven. I warmly renew the Apostolic Blessing to you who are present here, to the guests of the House and to all your collaborators.