



The Holy See

***ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS BENEDICT XVI
TO A GROUP OF SPONSORS AND PROMOTERS
OF THE HOLY SEE PAVILION
AT THE 2008 INTERNATIONAL EXPOSITION IN ZARAGOZA (SPAIN)***

*Papal Summer Residence, Castel Gandolfo
Thursday, 10 September 2009*

*Your Excellency,
Mr Ambassador,
Dear Brothers and Sisters,*

I am pleased to receive you and to welcome at this meeting each and every one of you, accompanied by your families. I warmly hope that your visit to Rome, to the tombs of the Apostles, will strengthen you in your faith and fill your hearts with joy and peace.

First of all, I wish to express to you my deep gratitude for your valuable collaboration with the Archdiocese of Zaragoza and the Apostolic Nunciature in Madrid, in setting up the Holy See Pavilion at the International Exposition in Zaragoza last year.

The Holy See pavilion, one of the most visited and appreciated, housed an important exhibition of the valuable artistic, cultural and religious patrimony that the Church looks after. The initiative aimed to offer its numerous visitors a timely reflection on the importance and fundamental value of water for human life.

Through its participation in the Zaragoza Expo, the Holy See sought not only to demonstrate the imperative need to protect the environment and nature constantly but also to discover their deepest spiritual and religious dimension. Today, as never before, it is essential to help people grasp that Creation is something more than a simple source of wealth to be exploited by human hands. Indeed, when God, through creation, gave man the keys to the earth, he expected him to

use this great gift properly, making it fruitful in a responsible and respectful way. The human being discovers the intrinsic value of nature if he learns to see it as it truly is, the expression of a project of love and truth which speaks to us of the Creator and of his love for humanity, which will find its fullness in Christ at the end of time (cf. *Caritas in Veritate*, n. 48). In this regard, it is appropriate to recall once again the close relationship that exists between protection of the environment and respect for the ethical requirements of human nature, since "when the 'human ecology' is respected within society, environmental ecology also benefits" (*ibid.*, n. 51).

At the end of this meeting, I would like once again to express my gratitude to you for your generous collaboration, as well as to all the people, institutions and firms that took part in this important and praiseworthy initiative. On this occasion, I commend you in a special way to the intercession of the Virgin of the Pillar, at whose feet flow the abundant waters of the River Ebro. With these warm sentiments, I cordially impart my Apostolic Blessing to you and to your families.

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