



The Holy See

**ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS BENEDICT XVI
TO THE "CARABINIERI" BRIGADE
OF THE COMPAGNIA ROMA SAN PIETRO
AT THE BEGINNING OF THE NEW YEAR**

Clementine Hall

Thursday, 7 January 2010

*Venerable Brother,
General Commandant,
Generals,
Commandant and dear Carabinieri of the "Compagnia Roma San Pietro",*

I am pleased to receive you and to address to each one my cordial welcome. I greet Archbishop Vincenzo Pelvi, Military Ordinary for Italy, and the General Commandant of the Carabinieri Brigade, General Leonardo Gallitelli, as I thank him for the courteous words he has addressed to me on behalf of everyone present. With them I greet the other Generals and Officers, the Provincial Commandant of the Force, General Vittorio Tomasone, and the Commandant of the San Pietro Corps, Captain Gabriele De Pascalis. My thanks to you all, and particularly to you, dear *Carabinieri*, for the hard work you carry out with your watchful and discreet presence around the Vatican.

Your commitment helps to ensure safety and serenity to the pilgrims and visitors who come to the heart of the Catholic faith and permits them to enjoy the necessary spiritual recollection during their visit to the [Tomb of the Apostle Peter](#) and to the Basilica that contains it. It also creates a favourable atmosphere for the meeting with the Successor of Peter, to whom Christ entrusted the task of confirming his brethren in the faith (cf. Lk 22: 31). As Bernini's majestic colonnade suggests, the house of Peter is ever open to welcoming, in an ideal embrace, believers and all people of good will, who receive from the Magisterium of the [Roman Pontiffs](#) light and encouragement to grow in faith and to become builders of peace and of a serene and civil coexistence. Of this peaceful and intense convergence of people of different ages, origins and

cultures, you are witnesses, protectors and guarantors, silent and hard-working but also indispensable and valuable.

The Christmas celebrations which ended recently permitted a large number of people to appreciate your humble but essential work, so that for each visitor the pilgrimage to Rome might be a unique opportunity to experience the joy of faith and the values of brotherhood, acceptance and reciprocal respect, after the example of the One who, being God, became a Child out of love for us.

Thank you again, dear friends, for your collaboration! May the Lord reward you. I hope that your faith, the tradition of fidelity and generosity to which you are heirs, the ideals of your Corps, may help you find in this delicate service ever new reasons for satisfaction and positive experiences for your professional and personal life.

May Mary the *Virgo fidelis*, your Patroness, accompany you and the entire Corps, especially those who in various countries of the world are involved in sensitive peace-keeping missions, and may she accept your good resolutions, presenting them to her divine Son.

I would like to conclude this pleasant meeting by expressing to you and to your families my fervent good wishes for every grace desired and for prosperity in the Lord for the New Year. With these wishes, I impart my Apostolic Blessing to all with all my heart.

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