



The Holy See

***ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS BENEDICT XVI
TO THE CIVIL AND MILITARY AUTHORITIES,
THE RELIGIOUS COMMUNITIES
AND THOSE WHO WORK IN THE VARIOUS SERVICES***

*Hall of the Swiss, Papal Summer Residence, Castel Gandolfo
Thursday, 30 September 2010*

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Before saying "goodbye" to Castel Gandolfo at the end of the summer season, I am glad to meet all of you who represent the ecclesial and civil communities of this pleasant little town so dear to me, where every year Providence grants me a serene and fruitful stay.

I first offer a brotherly greeting and cordial gratitude to Bishop Marcello Semeraro of Albano; I extend it to the entire diocese which I follow with special and prayerful affection in its life of faith and Christian witness. I then greet the parish priest of Castel Gandolfo and the parish community, together with the various male and female religious institutes who live and work here, joyfully serving the Gospel and their brethren.

I address a respectful greeting to the Mayor and to the members of the Municipal Administration, as I once again express my sincere gratitude for their indispensable contribution, in their own province so that Castel Gandolfo may give a proper welcome to the numerous pilgrims who come here from every part of the world. Through you I wish to express to your fellow-citizens my deep appreciation for the well-known courtesy and caring attention with which they surround me and follow my activity at the service of the universal Church. I would then like to thank warmly the directors and all those who work in the various services of the Governorate, starting with the Police Force, the Garden Services and the Health and Technical Services, as well as the Pontifical Swiss Guard.

Dear friends, I address to all of you a special "thank you" for the concern and professionalism with

which you have striven to anticipate my needs and those of my collaborators and of all who came to Castel Gandolfo in the summer months to visit me. I assure each one of you and your families of my constant remembrance in prayer.

I also address a thought of heartfelt gratitude to the officers and agents of the various Italian Police Forces for their punctual and efficient work, as well as to the officers and airmen of the 31st Squadron of the Italian Air force. I thank God and I am grateful to you all, because everything always happened in an orderly and peaceful way.

In saying "goodbye" to you I would like to entrust to your consideration the figure of St Vincent de Paul, whose Memorial we are celebrating today. Pope Leo XIII proclaimed this apostle of charity, so dear to the Christian people and known in particular through the Sisters he founded, the "universal patron of all the works of charity throughout the world". With his ceaseless apostolic action he ensured that the Gospel would become increasingly a bright beacon of hope and love for the people of his time, and, in particular, for the poorest in body and mind. May his virtuous example and his intercession inspire in your communities and in each one of you a renewed commitment to solidarity, so that the cooperation of each and everyone may help to build the common good.

I accompany this cordial wish with the assurance of my remembrance to the Lord, so that he may help all of you and your families with his grace and fill you with abundant consolations. I thank you once again, dear friends, and I cordially bless you.

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