



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, 29 September 2011*

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

This year too the summer period I customarily spend in this pleasant and hospitable place that is ever dearer to me is coming to an end. This summer too, Castel Gandolfo has opened its doors to the many pilgrims and visitors who came to meet the Pope and pray with him, especially on Sundays for the regular Angelus appointment and very often on Wednesdays for the General Audience. In these months, I have once again been able to appreciate the concern and the generous work of so many people committed to guaranteeing the necessary assistance to me and my collaborators, as well as to the guests and pilgrims who come to visit me. I would like to express my deep gratitude for all this to each one of you, who made my peaceful stay possible.

I greet with fraternal affection Bishop Marcello Semeraro of Albano Laziale and I am grateful for the kindness that he has always shown me. I greet the parish priest and the parish community of Castel Gandolfo, together with the religious communities and lay people, men and women, who are present in the area. I have felt their spiritual closeness in these months and I wholeheartedly thank them, as I express to everyone the wish that they may respond to God's call with renewed generosity, expending their energy at the service of the Gospel.

I next address a respectful greeting to Hon. Mr Mayor and to the members of the Board of the Municipal Administration. Thank you for your attention and for all you have done for me and my collaborators in these months. Through you, dear Civil Administrators, I thank and greet all the citizens, with a special thought for the elderly and the sick, whom I assure with affection of my remembrance in prayer.

I now address the directors and staff of the various services of the Governorate: the Police Force, the Garden Services, Technical and Health-Care Services, as well as the Pontifical Swiss Guard. Dear friends, I express to you my sincere esteem and deep appreciation of the work you have carried out daily, guaranteeing assistance and safety to the entire Apostolic Palace and to the Pontifical Villas.

I then thank the staff and Officers of the various Italian Security Forces for their assiduous cooperation, as well as the Officers and Airmen of the 31st Squadron of the Air Force. If everything has taken place in calmness and serenity, it is without a doubt also due to your presence and your highly qualified service.

Dear brothers and sisters, I express to you all my most sincere gratitude. Thank you again for coming to this meeting. I especially thank those who expressed your sentiments. For my part I assure you all that I will not fail to pray for each one of you and for all your intentions, and I ask you to remember me in your prayers.

May the Lord, rich in goodness and mercy, who never permits those who trust in him to lack his help, always be your firm support. May the Virgin Mary, whom we shall invoke in the month of October in a special way with the recitation of the Holy Rosary, watch over you with motherly protection. May she accompany you and your families at every moment. With these sentiments, I bless you with affection together with your relatives and all your loved ones.

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