



The Holy See

ORDINARY PUBLIC CONSISTORY
FOR THE CREATION OF NEW CARDINALS

***ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS BENEDICT XVI
TO THE NEW CARDINALS, THEIR FAMILIES
AND PILGRIMS PRESENT FOR THE CONSISTORY***

*Paul VI Hall
Monday, 20 February 2012*

[[Video](#)]

*Your Eminences,
Dear Brothers in the Episcopate and in the Priesthood,
Dear Brothers and Sisters,*

I meet with great joy you, the relatives and friends of the new Cardinals, the day after the solemn celebrations of the [Consistory](#) at which these beloved Pastors were called to become members of the [College of Cardinals](#). Thus I am given the possibility of offering my cordial greetings in the most personal and affectionate way to all and in particular my congratulations and good wishes to the new Cardinals. May the most important and evocative event of the Consistory be, for you who are present here and for all who are linked to the new Cardinals in various capacities, a motive and an incentive to gather around them with affection. May you feel even closer to their hearts and to their apostolic concern; listen with lively hope to their words as fathers and teachers. Be united in faith and charity with them and with one another, so as to be ever more fervent and courageous witnesses of Christ.

I greet you first, dear Cardinals of the Church in Italy! Cardinal Fernando Filoni, Prefect of the [Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples](#); Cardinal Antonio Maria Vegliò, President of the [Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant Peoples](#); Cardinal Giuseppe

Bertello, President of the Pontifical Commission for [Vatican City State](#) and President of the Governorate of the same State; Cardinal Francesco Coccopalmerio, President of the [Pontifical Council for Legislative Texts](#); Cardinal Domenico Calcagno, President of the [Administration of the Patrimony of the Apostolic See](#); Cardinal Giuseppe Versaldi, President of the [Prefecture for the Economic Affairs of the Holy See](#); and lastly, Cardinal Giuseppe Betori, Archbishop of Florence. Venerable Brothers, may the affection and prayers of so many who are dear to you sustain you in your service to the Church, so that each one of you may bear a generous witness to the Gospel of truth and charity.

I cordially greet the French-speaking pilgrims, and most particularly the Belgians who have accompanied His Eminence Cardinal Julien Ries. May our loyalty to Christ be firm and unfaltering in order to make our witness credible. Our society, which is experiencing moments of uncertainty and doubt, needs the clarity of Christ. May every Christian bear witness to him with faith and courage, and may the season of Lent which is approaching, enable all to return to God. A good pilgrimage to you all!

I am pleased to extend a warm greeting to the English-speaking Prelates whom I had the joy of raising to the dignity of Cardinal in Saturday's Consistory: Cardinal Edwin Frederick O'Brien, Grand Master of the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem; Cardinal George Alencherry, Major Archbishop of Ernakulam-Angamaly of the Syro-Malabars, India; Cardinal Thomas Christopher Collins, Archbishop of Toronto, Canada; Cardinal Timothy Michael Dolan, Archbishop of New York, United States of America; Cardinal John Tong Hon, Bishop of Hong Kong, the People's Republic of China; Cardinal Prosper Grech, O.S.A., Emeritus Professor of various Roman Universities and Consultor of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith.

I also extend a cordial welcome to the family members and friends who join them today. I ask you to continue to support the new Cardinals by your prayers as they take up their important responsibilities in the service of the Apostolic See.

I address a cordial greeting to the new German-speaking Cardinals, Cardinal Rainer Maria Woelki, Archbishop of Berlin, and Cardinal Karl Josef Becker of the Society of Jesus. I assure them of my affection and my prayers for the special service entrusted to them in the universal Church and I commend them to the protection of Mary, Mother of the Church.

I also greet with joy their relatives and friends and the pilgrims from their Dioceses of Berlin and Cologne, their collaborators in the various ecclesial institutions, the representatives of politics and public life, as well as all their compatriots who have come to Rome for this Consistory. I would like in addition to entrust the new Cardinals to your prayers so that, in conformity with the symbol of the purple they are now wearing, they may act as witnesses of the truth, prepared for sacrifice, and as faithful co-workers of the Successor of Peter.

I greet with affection Cardinal Santos Abril y Castelló, Archpriest of the Basilica of St Mary Major, and his relatives, the bishops, priests, religious and lay people who came from Spain especially for this occasion. I ask them all to accompany the new members of the College of Cardinals with their prayers and spiritual closeness, so that, full of love for God and closely united to the Successor of Peter, they may carry out their spiritual and apostolic mission in full fidelity to the Gospel.

I greet the new Portuguese-speaking Cardinals and their relatives, friends and co-workers and, likewise, the various representatives of the ecclesial and civil communities, who benefit from the honour that has just been conferred on Cardinal João Braz de Aviz, who guides the Congregation for the Institutes of Consecrated Life and the Societies of Apostolic Life, and on Cardinal Manuel Monteiro de Castro, who heads the Apostolic Penitentiary. I entrust to the Virgin Mary your lives dedicated to the service of the unity and holiness of the People of God.

I address an affectionate greeting to the new Cardinal Dominik Duka and to all of you, the faithful who have come from the Czech Republic to share in his joy. May these days of festivity and prayer awaken in you a renewed love from Christ and for his Church. My blessing to you all! Praised be Jesus and Mary!

I greet Cardinal Willem Jacobus Eijk, Archbishop of Utrecht, and the faithful who have accompanied him. I hope that these days of fervent spirituality will awaken in each one fresh love for Christ and for his Church. Continue to support your Archbishop with prayer, so that he may continue to guide the people entrusted to him with apostolic zeal.

I greet with joy H.B. Lucian Mureşan and all of you, faithful of Romania, who have wished to gather round your beloved Pastor, whom I have created a Cardinal. With you I greet the entire Romanian people and your homeland, now even more closely bound to the See of St Peter! May my blessing always sustain you.

Dear friends, thank you again for your important presence. The creation of the new Cardinals is an opportunity to reflect on the universal mission of the Church in human history: in human events, often agitated and conflicting, the Church is ever alive and present, bringing Christ, light and hope for the whole of humanity. Remaining united with the Church and the message of salvation that she disseminates means being anchored to the Truth, strengthening the meaning of the true values, serene in facing every event. I therefore urge you to remain united to your Pastors always, as well as to the new Cardinals, in order to be in communion with the Church.

The unity of the Church is a divine gift to be protected and developed. I entrust you, Venerable Brother Cardinals and the faithful who have accompanied you, to the protection of the Mother of God and of the Apostles Peter and Paul. With these sentiments I warmly impart my Apostolic Blessing to you.

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