



The Holy See

**LETTER OF HIS HOLINESS BENEDICT XVI
TO CARDINAL CAMILLO RUINI
ON THE OCCASION OF THE
24th ITALIAN EUCHARISTIC CONGRESS IN BARI**

*To my Venerable Brother
Cardinal Camillo Ruini
President, Italian Bishops' Conference*

Last October, Archbishop Francesco Cacucci of Bari, and Archbishop Angelo Comastri, the then Prelate of Loreto and President of the Italian Committee for Eucharistic Congresses, sent a pressing invitation to my Venerable Predecessor John Paul II to preside at the concluding celebrations of the 24th Italian Eucharistic Congress, scheduled to be held in Bari from 21-29 May.

This very significant event for the Italian Church occurs within the context of the special Year of the Eucharist, during which Catholics of the entire world are encouraged to renew their understanding of the great gift given to us by Christ at the Last Supper. In the bread and in the wine, which in Holy Mass become the Body and Blood of the Lord, may the Christian people find nourishment and sustenance to travel on the path towards sanctity, the universal vocation of all the baptized.

Particularly pertinent is the theme selected: "*Without Sunday we cannot live*", on which the Church in Italy is reflecting to find effective means of pastoral action aimed at rediscovering ever more deeply the value of the Lord's Day, in which is celebrated the mystery of Easter, of which the Eucharist is the authentic and perennial commemoration.

I willingly confirm what my beloved Predecessor had previously established, and ask you, Venerable Brother, to be my Special Envoy to this Eucharistic Congress. As for me, I count on being present at the concluding Eucharistic Celebration on Sunday, 29 May, to render homage to Christ in the Sacrament of his love and at the same time to reinforce the ties of communion that

bind the Successor of Peter to the Church in Italy and her Pastors.

From now on, I assure you of my prayers for such an important ecclesial assembly, so that it will be rich in spiritual fruit for Christians and for the entire Italian Community, and I invoke the maternal protection of Mary Most Holy upon all of you.

With the above-mentioned sentiments, I impart to you, to the dear Prelates of Italy and to the people entrusted to their pastoral care a special Apostolic Blessing.

From the Vatican, 13 May 2005

BENEDICT XVI

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