



## The Holy See

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***LETTER OF HIS HOLINESS BENEDICT XVI  
TO H.E. Mr RENÉ PRÉVAL,  
PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF HAITI,  
FOLLOWING THE EARTHQUAKE WHICH DEVASTED THE COUNTRY***

*To H.E. Mr René Préval  
President of the Republic of Haiti*

Having learned with deep distress of the earthquake that has just tragically hit your beloved country, I wish to assure you, Your Excellency, of my profound sympathy and fervent prayer for all the people affected by this dreadful disaster. I ask God to welcome into the peace of his Kingdom all those who have lost their lives in the earthquake and to comfort their families which, in many cases, have been unable to give a dignified burial to their loved ones who they have lost.

I also pray that the spirit of solidarity may dwell in all hearts and that calm may prevail in the streets, so that the generous aid arriving from the various countries may bring relief to all, and that those who today lack everything may feel the comfort of knowing that the whole of the international community is taking action to help them.

I warmly appreciate the commitment of all those, Haitians and foreigners who, sometimes at the risk of their own lives, are doing their utmost to seek and rescue the survivors and I thank them with all my heart. I would like to assure you, Your Excellency, that through her institutions and quite apart from the deep emotion that has been aroused, the Catholic Church will stand beside the people sorely tried by this calamity and, as far as she is able, she will help to give them the chance of a brighter future.

As a pledge of affection for all, I warmly grant the whole population of Haiti, undergoing this ordeal, a special Apostolic Blessing.

*From the Vatican, 16 January 2010*

**BENEDICT XVI**

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