



The Holy See

***MESSAGE OF HIS HOLINESS BENEDICT XVI
TO CARDINAL CRESCENZIO SEPE,
METROPOLITAN ARCHBISHOP OF NAPLES
ON THE OCCASION OF THE OPENING
OF THE SPECIAL JUBILEE YEAR
PROCLAIMED BY THE ARCHDIOCESE***

*To my Venerable Brother
Cardinal Crescenzo Sepe
Metropolitan Archbishop of Naples*

I would like to express to you, venerable Brother, my pleasure at the solicitude — which you have expressed in many ways — for the beloved Church of Naples, whose history is now being enriched by another important chapter with the opening of a special Jubilee Year, 10 years after the Great Jubilee of the Year 2000.

I still treasure in my heart vivid memories of my [Pastoral Visit on 21 November 2007](#) and I am ever grateful to the Neapolitan people for the affectionate embrace with which they welcomed me.

This diocesan Community has a valuable religious heritage that demands consistent faithfulness and the courage of witness. In the wake of this rich tradition Christian holiness has flourished abundantly, expressed in well known figures who have made a deep mark on the Church and on society.

It is from these luminous examples that the duty derives to extend this history of faith and charity in your region, with vigour and apostolic zeal.

Of course, today's social and cultural context is very different from that of the past. If it is granted to rejoice in the Lord for the true and persevering faith of so many Christians, it is painful to note the spread of a secularist vision of life and the eruption of evils that afflict civil society, which is

being undermined by individualism.

In this atmosphere the influence of negative and deviant models can also be seen. They have a pronounced effect on family and social life, and in particular on the new generation. Therefore I would like to reaffirm the urgent need for the human and Christian formation of children and young people because they are seriously exposed to the risks of deviation. We need to form men and women with strong personalities, a sound faith and a consistent Christian life. I urge parents to make Jesus and his message known to their children from the earliest age with the signs and words that the Christian community has always suggested and practised. The future depends largely on the success of this integral formative commitment.

In the various milieus of life, Christians are called to be operators of truth and courageous witnesses of the Gospel. Each one can and must strive to ensure that the spiritual and ethical values, expressed in their lifestyle, make a decisive contribution to building a more just and brotherly society.

It will therefore be necessary to strive to guarantee, with the inspiration and strength that come from God, relationships of genuine charity that are expressed in practical forms of solidarity and service, presenting alternative examples of life, accessible to all and at the same time emblematic.

It will thus be possible to reinforce the awareness that the seed of the Kingdom of God is present today too, as it has always been, a seed endowed with a future, capable — if it is accepted personally and generously — of transforming even the most challenging situations and of renewing the heart and face of Naples.

Venerable Brother, I entrust the good resolutions of this diocesan Jubilee Year to Our Lady of Carmel, Protectress of the City of Naples.

May the Virgin Mary, Mother of Holy Hope, and the venerable Bishop and Martyr St Januarius encourage and sustain the common effort to enable Naples to rediscover the splendour of her best times.

With these wishes, I cordially impart to you and to the entire diocesan and municipal community a special Apostolic Blessing, as a pledge of peace and spiritual fervour.

From the Vatican, 14 December 2010

BENEDICTUS PP. XVI

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