



The Holy See

PASTORAL VISIT TO VITERBO AND BAGNOREGIO

PRAYER OF HIS HOLINESS BENEDICT XVI TO OUR LADY OF THE OAK TREE

Dear Sisters,

It is a true joy for me to be able to meet with you in this place so dear to popular devotion. You nuns who live a contemplative life have the mission within the Church to be torches that, in the silence of the monastery, burn with prayer and with love for God. I entrust to you my intentions, the intentions of the Pastor of this Diocese and the needs of those who live in this land. Above all, in this Year for Priests, I entrust to you the priests, seminarians and vocations. In your prayerful silence, may you be their support "from afar" and convey to them your spiritual motherhood, offering to the Lord the sacrifice of your lives for their sanctification and for the good of souls. I thank you for your presence and I bless you wholeheartedly; please extend the Pope's greeting and Blessing also to your Sisters who were unable to attend. I ask you now to join with me in invoking Mary's maternal protection upon this diocesan community and upon the inhabitants of this land, rich in religious and cultural traditions.

Holy Virgin, Our Lady of the Oak,
Patroness of the Diocese of Viterbo,
gathered together in this Shrine
consecrated to you,
we extend to you a plea and
a confident prayer:
Watch over the Successor of Peter
and over the Church
entrusted to his care;
watch over this diocesan community
and its pastors,

over Italy, over Europe and
over the other continents.

Queen of Peace, obtain for us
the gift of harmony and peace
for all peoples and all mankind.

Obedient Virgin, Mother of Christ,
who, with your docile "yes" to
the Angel's announcement,
became the Mother of the Almighty,
help all your children to follow
the plans that the heavenly Father
has for each one, in order
to cooperate in the universal plan
of redemption which Christ fulfilled
by dying on the Cross.

Virgin of Nazareth,
Queen of the family,
make our Christian families
schools of evangelical life,
enriched by the gift of many vocations
to the priesthood and
to the consecrated life.
Keep intact the unity of our families,
today so threatened from all sides.
making them hearths of serenity and
of harmony, where patient dialogue
dispels difficulties and differences.
Above all, watch over those
who are divided and in crisis,
Mother of forgiveness
and reconciliation.

Immaculate Virgin,
Mother of the Church,
nourish the enthusiasm of each
component of our Dioceses:
of parishes and ecclesial groups,
of associations and new forms
of apostolic commitment

that the Lord inspires with
his Holy Spirit;
keep steadfast and determined
the will of those whom
the Guardian of the masses
continues to call as labourers
in his vineyard, so that,
resisting every worldly enticement
and temptation,
they may persevere generously
along the path they have taken,
and with your maternal aid,
become witnesses to Christ
who are drawn by the splendour
of his Love, source of joy.

Clement Virgin, Mother of humanity,
turn your gaze to
the men and women of our time,
to peoples and to those
who govern them,
to nations and to continents;
comfort those who weep, who suffer,
who struggle because of
human injustice; sustain those
who waver under the weight of effort
and who look at the future
without hope; encourage those
who work to build a better world
where justice triumphs and
brotherhood reigns,
where selfishness, hate and
violence cease.
May every form and
manifestation of violence
be conquered by the
peace-making power of Christ.

Virgin of listening, Star of Hope,
Mother of Mercy,
the source through which

Jesus came into the world,
our life and our joy,
we thank you and we renew
the offering of our lives, certain that
you will never abandon us,
especially in the
dark and difficult moments of life.
Be with us always,
now and at the hour of our death.

Amen!

Viterbo, 6 September 2009