



The Holy See

***ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS BENEDICT XVI
TO CARDINAL FRIEDRICH WETTER
ACCOMPANIED BY A DELEGATION
OF THE METROPOLITAN CHAPTER OF MUNICH***

Clementine Hall

Monday, 16 April 2007

Your Eminence, Dear Canon and Dear Friends,

There is so much to be grateful for that I do not know where to begin. And when the heart is full, words can sometimes spill over, yet at times one can be tongue-tied. At this moment, I have no words to express my heartfelt gratitude as I should like. I want to thank you warmly, dear Brother, for all that you have done in these long years as Archbishop of Munich, for all your energy, your faith, your love, knowledge, courage and friendship. I think that the Archdiocese feels all this and knows that it has been guided by a Good Shepherd. In these hours let us pray to God to help us to find the right person to take in hand St Corbinian's apostolate.

Above all, I would like to give heartfelt thanks for the experiences I had during those beautiful days of my [Visit to Bavaria](#), especially to Munich and to Freising, and for the love, attention, careful preparation, dedication and, obviously, the prayers in common.

Those days - from the beginning at the airport and especially in Marienplatz, in the Cathedral of Munich and that of Freising, at the Fair and in the Bishops' Residence itself - are luminously present in my mind. The human being needs memories to help him.

I am accustomed to thinking back with a grateful heart to the landscape of memories; and it is then that I am particularly fond of thinking back to those blessed days.

I thank you all, dear Brothers: a special personal relationship binds me to each one of you; I do not need to list them here - nor could I. I know well that each of you, in your office, carries out a

service for the Archdiocese, for the Church of God, in profound communion with the one chosen to be the Successor of Peter.

I know, so to speak, that an entire existential process and the gift of a life, the inner struggle and the effort of an existence are interwoven with your commitment and shine out in the Archdiocese, helping to ensure that you are able to live faith in the communion of the Church, in communion with the Lord and in communion with Our Lady of Munich, and joyously to pass it on to the future.

You are the Metropolitan Chapter of Our Lady - what a lovely name -, which unites, precisely, the *metropolis*, that is, the mother-city of the faith with the Mother of faith herself, thus to be able to spread the warmth and cordiality of the faith in our Land of Bavaria.

This morning, I had two encouraging conversations: one with the Minister President of Bavaria and the other with the Minister President of Schleswig-Holstein; in spite of coming from remarkably different environments and temperaments, they both expressed the inner certainty that faith gives access to a future and that at this moment in the encounter of cultures and with the conflict of cultures on the horizon, it is of prime importance that the interior, pacifying and healing power of the Christian faith remain alive in our people and thereby influence the future as a force for good.

There was another good meeting this morning: with Metropolitan Ioannis Zizioulas of Pergamon, the Envoy of the Patriarch of Constantinople, one of the great champions of the Catholic-Orthodox dialogue. He is sustained by a deep inner conviction that the encounter between Rome and Orthodoxy is fundamentally important for the European Continent and the future of universal history, and that we must spare no effort to ensure that this encounter truly leads to brotherly communion and that from it is then born the blessing of communion of faith: the blessing so that humanity may see that we are "one" and, on this basis, believe in Christ.

I think this is our common mission: to commit ourselves, each in his own role, so that the power of faith may become active in this world and effective as joy, as trust, as a gift at this moment.

Thank you again for the meeting in Munich and for the meeting here. Let us pray together that the Lord will help us, each one of us, to do the right thing, and thus that our history may be blessed. A warm "thank you" to you all, and please greet Bavaria for me!