



The Holy See

PASTORAL VISIT
OF HIS HOLINESS BENEDICT XVI
TO ASSISI
ON THE EIGHTH CENTENARY
OF THE CONVERSION OF SAINT FRANCIS

MEETING WITH THE COMMUNITY OF THE POOR CLARES

ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS BENEDICT XVI

*Basilica of St Clare
Sunday, 17 June 2007*

Thank you for your most beautiful singing! It is singing to accompany the expectation of the Lord's coming. But the Lord is always coming. Therefore, this is precisely a welcome song for the Lord. We ourselves are going to meet the Lord.

This encounter makes me think of similar encounters in past times, very beautiful encounters which are deeply engraved in my memory. To see again this life of love for the Lord, this life of Mary - totally absorbed in listening to the Lord and thus listening to the Word of God for humanity today - is always a great inspiration to me, a great encouragement.

We are celebrating 800 years since the conversion of St Francis. Conversion is not only a moment, an instant of life: it is a journey. And you are going ahead, you go before us on the path of conversion, on this journey which is sometimes very arduous but is always accompanied by the joys of the Lord.

And let us hope that today will be just such a day, lived in the joy of the Lord, a day when God's sun, so beautifully praised by St Francis, may also truly be our "centre" and brighten our hearts and our lives.

I am not prepared to say anything else now, but I thank you warmly for everything. For me Assisi is always an interior reference point, because I know that it has a great power of prayer, a power for the Pope in his mission to be helmsman of the Barque of Peter, of the Barque of Christ.

Therefore, let us move ahead with the Lord! I pray for you and please pray for me! Thus, despite the exterior distance we will remain profoundly united.

Thank you again!

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