



The Holy See

ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS BENEDICT XVI TO THE PERSONNEL OF THE PONTIFICAL VILLAS

Castel Gandolfo
Monday, 1st October 2007

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

With this meeting, my summer stay at Castel Gandolfo, which you have helped to make fruitful and tranquil, is coming to an end this year, too. This Farewell Visit thus offers me the opportunity to express to each one of you my deep gratitude for your work and for the dedication with which you carry it out. I greet you all with affection, starting with Dr Saverio Petrillo, General Director of the Pontifical Villas, and thank him for his cordial words on your behalf.

In these months, I have once again been able to experience your efficient, generous service. May the Lord, the source of all good, reward you for the spirit of sacrifice with which you carry it out daily. With your generous dedication, you make a significant contribution to the ministry of the Successor of Peter; a contribution that is often hidden but always useful. Continue to work in a spirit of faith so that your activities may become a testimony of love and fidelity to Christ, who calls all his disciples to follow him, each one fulfilling his own specific vocation in the Church and in the world.

A cordial "goodbye" to you! I assure you I shall continue to pray that God will protect you and your loved ones, and may you yourselves, dear friends, always accompany me with your remembrance in prayer. In view of the Feast of the Guardian Angels that we shall celebrate tomorrow, I entrust you in a special way to the loving protection of these heavenly spirits that the Lord has set beside us. May it be they who guide and accompany you on the path of good. I thank you once again for everything, and I express my best wishes to each one of you for a serene and active life. With these sentiments, I warmly impart the Apostolic Blessing to you who are present here and to your

families - I am glad that so many families are present: so many children are born here! - as a sign of my constant favour.

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