



The Holy See

**MESSAGE OF POPE FRANCIS
TO THE PEOPLE OF BERGAMO ON THE OCCASION
OF THE CANONIZATION OF BLESSED JOHN XXIII**

Dear Friends of Bergamo,

As the day of the canonization of Blessed [John XXIII](#) approaches, I felt the desire to send this greeting to your bishop, Francesco, to the priests, men and women religious and the faithful of the Diocese of Bergamo, and also to those who do not belong to the Church and to the whole civic community of Bergamo.

I know how much you love Pope John, and how much he loved his land. From the day of his election to the Pontificate, the name of Bergamo and of Sotto il Monte became well-known all over the world and, still today, 50 years later, they are associated with his smiling face and his fatherly tenderness.

I invite you to thank the Lord for the great gift which his holiness was for the universal Church, and I encourage you to preserve the memory of the land in which it grew: a land of profound faith lived daily, of families poor but united in love for the Lord, of communities able to share in simplicity.

Since then, the world has certainly changed and there are also new challenges to the mission of the Christian community. However that heritage can still inspire a Church called to live today the sweet and comforting joy of evangelizing, to be a companion on the path of every person, the “fountain of the village” to which all can draw the fresh water of the Gospel. The renewal called for by the [Second Ecumenical Vatican Council](#) opened the way and it is a special joy that the canonization of Pope Roncalli takes place together with that of Blessed [John Paul II](#), who carried this renewal forward during his long pontificate.

I am sure that even civic society will be able always to find inspiration from the life of the Bergamascan Pope and from the atmosphere he created, searching for new ways and ones suitable to the times in order to establish a coexistence based on the everlasting values of brotherhood and of solidarity.

Dear brothers and sisters, I entrust my message to *L'Eco di Bergamo*, of which the young priest Don Angelo Roncalli was a respected collaborator. Then when the ministry took him far away, he continued to receive *L'Eco* — the voice and sign of his land. I ask you to pray for me and I assure you of my thoughts and prayers, especially for the suffering and the sick — recalling the city hospital which you wished to dedicate to Pope John — and for the diocesan seminary, which was so dear to his heart. And to all of you, before the Easter celebrations, I send my Apostolic Blessing.

FRANCISCUS