

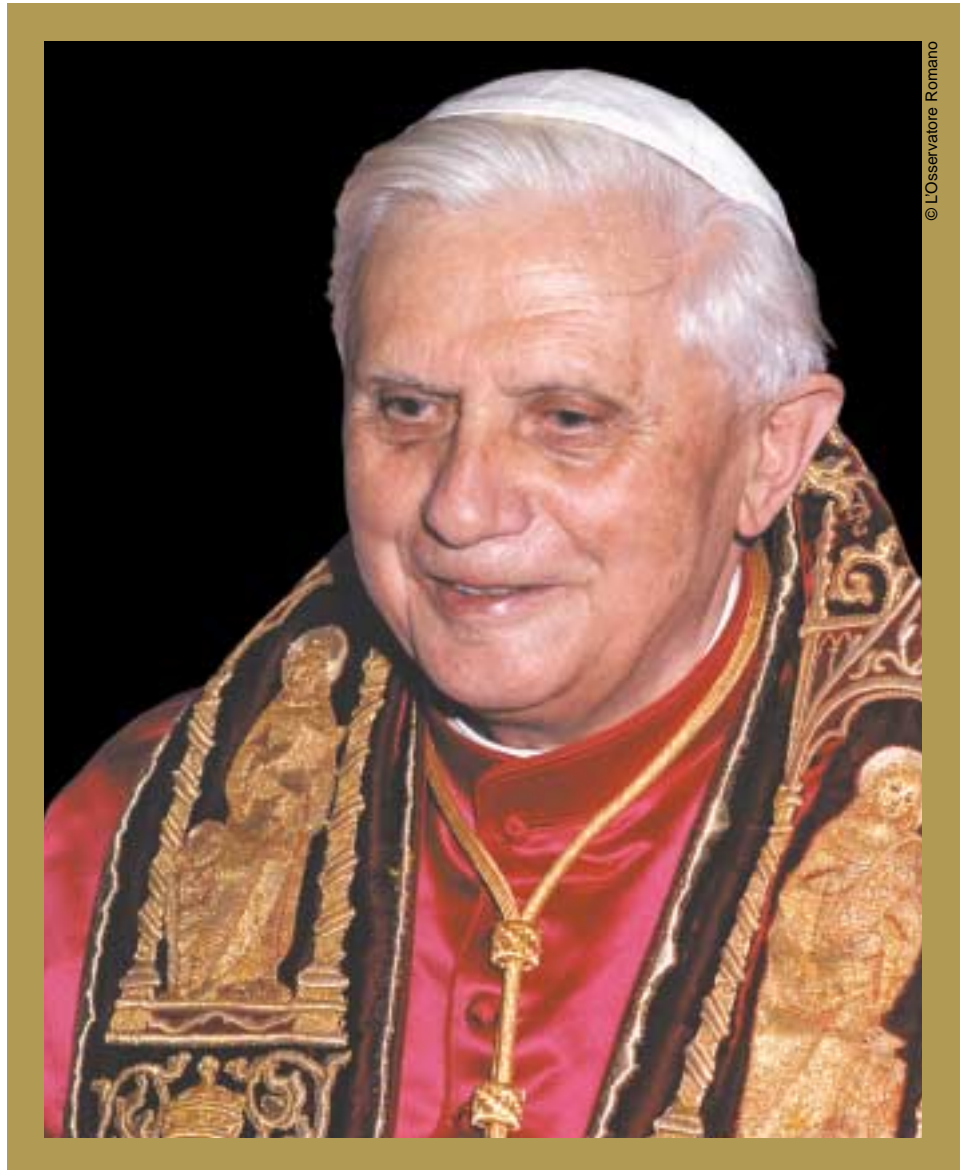


Welcome, Holy Father Benedict XVI

Our house is your house, for it is the house of Father Werenfried. Our charity was born and always grew in close union with the Bishop of Rome, in union with Peter. For half a century, each one of the supreme pontiffs put his own stamp on the identity of *Aid to the Church in Need*. Pius XII, John XXIII, Paul VI, and John Paul II opened their hearts to this priest and religious, our founder, whose life took such an amazing direction. They entrusted to him their most profound concerns. They made him their spokesman in preaching reconciliation, and in begging for aid in solidarity with the persecuted and the needy.

Now you are Peter. With your first words as Benedict XVI, you confessed to the world how weak you feel beneath the weight of this immense responsibility. You humbly implored the prayers of the People of God. For our part, together with the whole Church, we love you because you are the Vicar of Christ, because you are the mirror in which the image of the Good Shepherd is reflected today for all the nations. We welcome you with gratitude because, though frail, like every redeemed soul, you have been granted the grace of being our sure rock. Through you, Christ will show us the truth and will lead us in the vessel of the Church, even though the tempest may rage around us in the darkness of the night.

Since ACN is an association of “pontifical right,” we feel a special obligation to you, Holy Father. This bond arises from our earliest origins and determines our specific charism. So says the Testament of our founder, and his words are not merely recorded in our archives but engraved in our minds and hearts: “It should be sufficient for the Holy Father not even to instruct, but simply to express a wish, as reason for us to approve a project.” Besides, for many years, you have been one of us. Year after year you have given us your support as a benefactor. And it was you who wrote to us: “*The*



charity founded by Father Werenfried is a gift of Providence.” You also indicated to us the scope of our mission: “ACN

“The charity founded by Father Werenfried is a gift of Providence.”

Benedict XVI

helps the faithful in need, it helps where there is need of faith, and thus it is doing what is most necessary for our world.”

Welcome, Benedict XVI. While you were still a cardinal, Father Werenfried

admired you and loved you. He saw you as a friend. Now we, too, share your great concerns. Welcome! *Aid to the Church in Need* is your home. We are praying for you, we are listening to you. May Mary, the Mother of the Church, move the hearts of our benefactors, so that they may be generous in their support for the Church in need. So that we can help you, Holy Father, to energetically begin your work in the Vineyard of the Lord.

P. Joaquim Allienor

International Ecclesiastical Assistant



Benedict XVI - servant of the truth

Once more those words rang out across the vast colonnades of St. Peter's Square, those remarkable words which the Christian faithful first heard 26 years ago and which few could then have suspected would have the power to change the face of the earth: "Do not be afraid, but open wide the doors to Christ!" This time it was Benedict XVI who added these inspired words for the young people listening: "Do not be afraid of Christ! He takes nothing away, and he gives you everything. When we give ourselves to him, we receive a hundredfold in return."

All who heard him, whether believers, doubters or even unbelievers, sensed that here a bridge-builder was speaking on behalf of unity, for the Church and for the world. Just like his predecessor, Pope Benedict XVI is asking for our prayers, "so that I may learn to love you, the Holy Church, each one of you and all of you together more and more."

Joseph Ratzinger was born on April 16, 1927. At the age of just 50, he was included in the college of cardinals. Just a few months earlier Pope Paul VI had appointed him as Archbishop of Munich and Freising, and he was already well known as an adviser to the Vatican II and professor of dogmatic and fundamental theology. In 1981, Pope John Paul II called him to Rome and he became Prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. Here he did full justice to his motto "collaborators of the truth."



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He has given us many ringing words already, for instance: The Church cannot bargain with the truth, but must "maintain the fundamental moral water-table of humanity," the truth was not invented by a majority but "comes from God and therefore is not at our disposal." His acute analyses of the consequences of relativism have won him worldwide respect. Such thinking, he writes, renders these values 'in-different,' and hence "the heart of today's crisis is the renunciation of the truth." This crisis, this dictatorship of relativism, can only be overcome through a new relationship of reason and faith; indeed without this relationship there can be no world peace either, he believes. Here he is altogether in the tradition of



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Benedict XV, the Pope of peace during the First World War, and likewise of Saint Benedict of Nursia, patron of Europe.

Cardinal Ratzinger feared to assume the office of Vicar of Christ on earth. But he said yes, and this has filled him, visibly, with joy. As he said in his first address as Pope, he feels the "strong hand" of John Paul II, "squeezing mine." And he seems to hear John Paul II's words, "addressed to me especially in this moment: 'Do not be afraid!'"

He was actually planning to retire to his beloved home near Regensburg, Germany, where he hoped to write books and to pray. But God did not need him to write books.. He wanted Pope Benedict XVI. ●

I believe - Amen

In his Introduction to Christianity, published in 1968, Joseph Ratzinger wrote as a preface just three words: "I believe - Amen." Thirty-three years later, as Cardinal and Prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, he came across this sentence again, this time as the title of our *Little Catechism, I believe*. His congregation and the Clergy Congregation gave their approval to this catechism, which has now been published in 19 languages and in a printing of almost three million copies. The demand is enormous. Let us help our Holy Father to proclaim this redeeming Word throughout the world.

