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Pope Benedict XVI

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October 2009



"Follow ... the Way of Total Confidence in God" - Farewell address to religious and civil staff of Castel Gandolfo in the Swiss Hall of the Apostolic Palace before returning to Vatican City, October 1, 2009.

... I entrust you all to the maternal intercession of the Holy Virgin.

On St. John Leonardi - General audience in St. Peter's Square, October 7, 2009

... He (Leonardi) dedicated himself with enthusiasm to the apostolate among youth through the Company of Christian Doctrine, gathering around himself a group of young men with whom, on September 1, 1574, he founded the Congregation of Reformed Priests of the Blessed Virgin, subsequently called the Order of Clerks Regular of the Mother of God.... Along with the face of Christ, he fixed his gaze on the maternal face of Mary. She whom he chose patroness of his order, was for him teacher,

sister and mother, and he felt her constant protection.... Today the Church honors Our Lady of the Rosary, liturgical memorial that gives me the opportunity to confirm the importance of praying the rosary, a prayer so dear also to my venerated predecessors. I recommend it to you, dear young people, so that it will help you to do God's will and to find in the Immaculate Heart of Mary a safe refuge. May it make you, dear sick people, feel the comfort of our heavenly Mother, because with her you will be able to face moments of trial. Dear newlyweds, may the recitation of this prayer be for you a daily appointment for your family which will thus grow, thanks to the intercession of Mary, in unity and fidelity to the Gospel....

"You Must Be Sincere and Passionate Seekers of Truth."- Address at Rosary Event "With Africa and for Africa" with African Youth held in Paul VI Hall with participants from the special assembly for Africa of the Synod of Bishops and university students from Roman colleges, October 10, 2009

... At the end of this Marian prayer meeting, I send my most cordial greetings to all, with a sentiment of particular recognition for the Synodal Fathers present.... And thus, thanks to the collaboration of Telespazio, the Centro Televisivo Vaticano and Vatican Radio, many university students from the different African cities, with their Pastors also took part in the Rosary. I would like to send them an affectionate greeting.... May the Virgin Mary, Our Lady of Africa, watch over you in peace and guide you to her son Jesus the Savior!

... Dear friends, I greet with affection the many young students, especially those from Kenya, Nigeria, South Africa and Sudan, who have joined us in our prayer to Mary, the Mother of Jesus. We have entrusted to her maternal protection the success of the Second Special

Assembly for Africa of the Synod of Bishops.
May her intercession sustain Christians
everywhere, especially the peoples of Africa, and
may her example teach us to turn to the Lord
and persevere in prayer in our sorrows and our
joys....

I salute the university students gathered in Maputo
with the rosary in their hands and the name of Mary
on their lips, praying with Africa and for Africa, so
that the Christian faithful, filled with the Holy Spirit,
may accomplish the mission they received from
Jesus: to be the salt of the earth and the light that
guides the world to reconciliation and peace.... May
the Virgin Mother watch over you, and I entrust all
the youth of Mozambique and the other African
countries whose official language is Portuguese to
her.

... Meditating on the mysteries of the Rosary, we
have once again seen the true face of God who
reveals to us his presence in the life of every people
in Jesus Christ.... Dear brothers and sisters, with this
reciting of the Rosary we have entrusted the Second
Synod for Africa to the maternal intercession of the
Holy Virgin. We place in her hands the hopes,
expectations and projects of the African peoples,
along with their difficulties and sufferings....

"Jesus Invites His Disciples to the Total Giving of Their Lives" - Homily at Canonization Mass, October 11, 2009

... I would like to invite all of you to let yourselves be
drawn by the shining example of these Saints, to
allow yourselves to be guided by their teachings, so
that our whole existence can become a hymn of
praise to the love of God. May we gain this grace
through their heavenly intercession and, above all,
the maternal protection of Mary, Queen of the Saints
and Mother of humanity. Amen.

"The Virgin Mary Is the Star That Guides Every Journey of Sanctity." Angelus address, October 11, 2009

... [In Flemish:]

I greet the Flemish-speaking pilgrims, who have come to Rome to join in the thanksgiving of the Church for the canonization of Father Damian. Consecrated to the Heart of Jesus and Mary, this holy priest was led by God to let a total 'yes' bloom in his vocation. May the intercession of Our Lady and the Apostle of the Lepers free the world from leprosy, make us open to the love of God and grant us enthusiasm and joy in the service of our brothers and sisters.

... [In Italian:]

Dear brothers and sisters, the Virgin Mary is the star that guides every journey of sanctity. Her fiat is the perfect model of adhesion to the divine will and her magnificat expresses the Church's song of exultation. Already on this earth the Church rejoices in God's mighty deeds and in heaven praises his glory eternally. We turn to the Mother of Christ with filial confidence, asking, through her intercession and that of the newly-canonized saints, for peace and salvation.

On Peter the Venerable, Abbot of Cluny-General Audience, October 14, 2009

... Other aspects of Christian life dear to him were love of the Eucharist and devotion to the Virgin Mary. On the Most Holy Sacrament he has left us pages that are "one of the masterpieces of Eucharistic literature of all times" (ibid., p. 267), and on the Mother of God he wrote illuminating reflections, always contemplating her in close relationship with Jesus the Redeemer and his work of salvation. Suffice it to report this inspired elevation of his: "Hail, Blessed Virgin, who put malediction to flight. Hail, Mother of the Most High, spouse of the most meek Lamb. You conquered the

serpent, you have crushed his head, when the God generated by you annihilated him....

Shining star of the East, who puts to flight the shadows of the West. Dawn that precedes the sun, day that ignores the night.... Pray to God born from you, so that he will absolve us from our sin and, after forgiveness, grant us grace and glory." (Carmina, Pl 189, 1018-1019)

Jesus Himself Experienced Migration. - Papal Message for the Ninety-sixth World Day of Migrants and Refugees. Signed on October 16, 2009; released on November 29, 2009 and celebrated on January 17, 2010.

... As a child, Jesus himself experienced migration for, as the Gospel recounts, in order to flee the threats of Herod, he had to seek refuge in Egypt together with Joseph and Mary (cf. Mt 2:14)....

May the Blessed Virgin Mary watch over us all and help us to understand the difficulties faced by those who are far from their homeland. I assure all those who are involved in the vast world of migrants and refugees of my prayers and cordially impart to them the Apostolic Blessing.

The Church Exists to Proclaim This Message of Hope.- Angelus Address, October 18, 2009

... Dear friends, today, Oct. 18, is also the Feast of St. Luke the Evangelist, who, along with the Gospel, wrote the Acts of the Apostle to narrate the expansion of the Christian message to the ends of the then-known world. We invoke his intercession together with that of St. Francis Xavier and St. Therese of the Child Jesus, patrons of the missions, and of the Virgin Mary, that the Church may continue to spread the light of Christ among all the nations. I ask you, moreover, to pray for the Special

Assembly for Africa of the Synod of Bishops, which is taking place this week here in the Vatican.

On St. Bernard of Clairvaux-General Audience, October 21, 2009

... I would now like to reflect on two key aspects of Bernard's rich doctrine: they regard Jesus Christ and Mary Most Holy, his Mother....

In another famous sermon on the Sunday During the Octave of the Assumption, the holy abbot describes in impassioned terms the intimate participation of Mary in the redeeming sacrifice of the Son. "O holy Mother," he exclaims, "truly a sword has pierced your soul! ... To such a point the violence of pain has pierced your soul, that with reason we can call you more than martyr, because your participation in the Passion of the Son greatly exceeded in intensity the physical sufferings of martyrdom" (14: PL 183, 437-438).

Bernard has no doubts: "*per Mariam ad Iesum*," through Mary we are led to Jesus. He attests clearly to Mary's subordination to Jesus, according to the principles of traditional Mariology. But the body of the sermon also documents the privileged place of the Virgin in the economy of salvation, in reference to the very singular participation of the Mother (*compassio*) in the sacrifice of the Son. It is no accident that, a century and a half after Bernard's death, Dante Alighieri, in the last canto of the Divine Comedy, puts on the lips of the "Mellifluous Doctor" the sublime prayer to Mary: "Virgin Mary, daughter of your Son,/ humble and higher than a creature,/ fixed end of eternal counsel," (*Paradiso* 33, vv. 1ss.).

These reflections, characteristic of one in love with Jesus and Mary as St. Bernard was, rightly inflame again today not only theologians but all believers. At times an attempt is made to resolve the fundamental questions on God, on man and on the world with the sole force of reason. Instead, St. Bernard, solidly based on the Bible and on the Fathers of the

Church, reminds us that without a profound faith in God, nourished by prayer and contemplation, by a profound relationship with the Lord, our reflections on the divine mysteries risk becoming a futile intellectual exercise, and lose their credibility. Theology takes us back to the "science of the saints," to their intuitions of the mysteries of the living God, to their wisdom, gift of the Holy Spirit, which become the point of reference for theological thought.

... I would like to conclude these reflections on St. Bernard with the invocations to Mary that we read in one of his beautiful homilies. "In danger, in anguish, in uncertainty," he says, "think of Mary, call on Mary. May she never be far from your lips, from your heart; and thus you will be able to obtain the help of her prayer, never forget the example of her life. If you follow her, you cannot go astray; if you pray to her, you cannot despair; if you think of her, you cannot be mistaken. If she sustains you, you cannot fall; if she protects you, you have nothing to fear; if she guides you, do not tire; if she is propitious to you, you will reach the goal...." (*Hom. II super "Missus est,"* 17: PL 183, 70-71).

[In English, he said:]

... Bernard is also known for his fervent devotion to our Lady and his insight into her intimate sharing in the sacrifice of her Son. May Bernard's example of faith nourished by prayer, study and contemplation, lead us closer "to Jesus through Mary" and grant us that wisdom which finds joyful fulfillment in the knowledge of the saints in heaven.

**Courage! Get on Your Feet, Continent of Africa-
Homily at the concluding Mass of the Second
Special Assembly for Africa of the Synod of
Bishops. The three-week assembly considered
the theme "The Church in Africa at the Service
of Reconciliation, Justice and Peace," October
25, 2009**

... May the Virgin Mary recompense each and every one, and obtain that the Church in Africa grow in every part of that great continent, spreading the "salt" and the "light" of the Gospel everywhere.

Be Salt and Light in the Beloved African Land - Angelus Address, October 25, 2009

... I thank the Lord, who never tires in building up his Church in communion, and I invoke with confidence the maternal intercession of the Virgin Mary.