



The Holy See

**ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS BENEDICT XVI
TO MEMBERS OF THE ASSOCIATIONS
"PRO PETRI SEDE" AND "ETRENNES PONTIFICALES"**

*Consistory Hall
Friday, 27 February 2009*

Dear Friends,

I am particularly glad to welcome you while you are making the pilgrimage which brings you to the tomb of the Apostles every two years to ask the Lord to strengthen your faith and to bless your efforts to witness generously to his love.

The Pauline Year affords us the opportunity, through meditation on the words of the Apostle to the Gentiles, to regain a keener awareness of the fact that the Church is a Body pulsating with the same life as that of Jesus. In fact, each member of the ecclesial body is very deeply bound to all the others and could not ignore their needs.

Nourished with the same Eucharistic Bread, the baptized cannot remain indifferent while there is no bread on the peoples' table. This year too, you have willingly heard the appeal to make more room in your hearts for the needs of the deprived, so that the members of Christ's Body who are afflicted by poverty may be relieved and thus become more alive and freer to witness to the Good News.

By entrusting your savings to the Successor of Peter you enable him to exercise concrete and active charity which is the sign of his concern for all the Churches, for every baptized person and for every human being. Thanking you very warmly on behalf of all those whom your generosity will help as they fight against the evils that undermine their dignity.

By combating poverty, we give peace a greater chance to arrive and take root in hearts.

As I entrust you and all your loved ones to the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Our Lady of Mercy, with all my heart I grant you the Apostolic Blessing, which I extend to all the members of

your associations and their families.

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