



The Holy See

***ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS BENEDICT XVI
TO MEMBERS OF THE EMMANUEL COMMUNITY
ON THE OCCASION OF THE 20th ANNIVERSARY OF THE DEATH
OF THEIR FOUNDER, THE SERVANT OF GOD PIERRE GOURSAT***

Consistory Hall

Thursday, 3 February 2011

Dear Brothers in the Episcopate,

Dear Friends,

I am pleased to welcome you when the Emmanuel Community is preparing to celebrate the 20th anniversary of the death of Pierre Goursat, their Founder, whose cause of Beatification was introduced last year. May the example of his faith life and that of his missionary commitment encourage you and be a constant appeal for you to walk towards holiness!

In the coming months you will also be celebrating the 30th anniversary of FIDESCO's service in the least privileged countries and then the 40th anniversary of the Community's foundation, as well as the 20th anniversary of the recognition of the *Statutes* by the Pontifical Council for the Laity. I thank God with you for this work!

I address my cordial thanks to each and everyone of you, priests and lay people. I greet in particular the Moderator of the Community, whom I thank for his kind words, the members of the International Council, those in charge of the important services, as well as the Bishops the Community has produced. May your pilgrimage to Rome at the beginning of this Jubilee Year be an opportunity to renew your commitment to remain ardent disciples of Christ in fidelity to the Church and to her Pastors!

Dear friends, the profound grace of your Community comes from Eucharistic Adoration. From this Adoration is born compassion for all and from this compassion is born the thirst to evangelize (*cf.*

Statutes, Preamble, I). In the spirit of your charism, I thus encourage you to deepen your spiritual life by giving an essential place to the personal encounter with Christ, the Emmanuel, God-with-us, so that you may let yourselves be transformed by him and enable the passionate desire for mission to develop within you.

In the Eucharist you find the source of all your commitments in the following of Christ, and in adoring him you purify your contemplation of life in the world. “The love that we celebrate in the sacrament is not something we can keep to ourselves. By its very nature it demands to be shared with all. What the world needs is God’s love; it needs to encounter Christ and to believe in him” (*Sacramentum Caritatis*, n. 84). An authentically Eucharistic life is a missionary life. In a world that is often bewildered and that seeks new reasons for living, Christ’s light must be brought to all. Be zealous Gospel Missionaries amidst the men and women of today, sustained by a life that has been radically taken over by Christ! May you thirst to proclaim the word of God!

Today, the urgent need for this proclamation is making itself felt, particularly in families that so often fall apart, among young people and in intellectual milieus. May you help to renew the apostolic dynamism of parishes from within by developing their spiritual and missionary approaches! I further encourage you to be attentive to people who return to the Church and who have not had the benefit of a sound catechesis. Help them to root their faith in an authentically theological, sacramental and ecclesial life! Especially the work carried out by FIDESCO witnesses to your commitment to the people of the least privileged countries. May your charity be radiant with Christ’s love everywhere and thus become a force for building a more just and fraternal world!

I invite your community in particular to live authentic communion among its members. This communion, which is not merely human solidarity among the members of a single spiritual family, is founded on your relationship with Christ and on the common commitment to serving him. The community life that you hope to develop, with respect for each one’s state of life, will thus be for society a living witness of the brotherly love that must give life to all human relations. Fraternal communion is already a proclamation of the new world which Christ came to establish.

May this same communion, which is not withdrawal into self, also be effective with the local Churches. Indeed, each charism relates to the growth of the whole of Christ’s Body. Missionary action must therefore constantly be adapted to the situations of the local Church, with permanent concern for cooperation and collaboration with the pastors, under the authority of the Bishop. Moreover, the mutual recognition of the diversity of vocations in the Church and of their indispensable contribution for evangelization, is an eloquent sign of the unity of Christ’s disciples and of the credibility of their witness.

The Virgin Mary, Mother of the Emmanuel, has an important place in your Community’s spirituality. Take her into your “home”, as the Beloved Disciple did, so that she may truly be the mother who guides you towards her divine Son and who helps you to stay faithful to him. As I entrust you to

her motherly intercession, I warmly impart the Apostolic Blessing to each and every one of you, as well as to all the members of the Emmanuel Community.