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Pope Benedict XVI

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February 2010



**"A School Of Trust In The Mercy Of God" -
Homily On Day Of Consecrated Life, February
2, 2010**

Dear Brothers and Sisters!

The feast of the Presentation of Jesus in the Temple is a celebration of a mystery of the life of Christ, linked to the precept of the Mosaic law that prescribed for parents, 40 days after the birth of their first-born, to go to the Temple of Jerusalem to offer their son to the Lord and for the ritual purification of the mother (cf Exodus 13:1-2.11-16; Leviticus 12:1-8). Mary and Joseph also fulfilled this rite, offering -- according to the law -- a couple of turtle doves or pigeons. Reading things in greater depth, we understand that at that moment it was God himself who presented his Only-begotten Son to men, through the words of the elderly Simeon and the prophetess Anna. Simeon, in fact, proclaimed Jesus as "salvation" of humanity, as "light" of all nations and "sign of contradiction," because he would reveal the thoughts of hearts (cf

Luke 2:29-35). ...

We approach the thrice Holy to offer our life and our mission, personal and community, of men and women consecrated to the Kingdom of God. Let us carry out this interior gesture in profound spiritual communion with the Virgin Mary: while contemplating her in the act of presenting the Child Jesus in the Temple, we venerate her as the first and perfect consecrated one, carried by that God she carries in her arms; Virgin, poor and obedient, totally dedicated to us because totally of God. In her school, and with her maternal help, we renew our "here I am" and our "fiat." Amen.

**"God, In Fact, Wishes To Heal The Whole Man"
- Homily For Day Of The Sick, February 11,
2010**

... Hence, it is not surprising that Mary, Mother and model of the Church, is invoked and venerated as "salus infirmorum," "health of the sick." As first and perfect disciple of her Son, she has always shown, accompanying the journey of the Church, special solicitude for the suffering. Testimony of this is given by the thousands of people who go to Marian shrines to invoke the Mother of Christ, and find strength and relief. The Gospel narrative of the Visitation (cf. Luke 1:39-56) shows us how the Virgin, after the evangelical announcement, did not keep to herself the gift received, but left immediately to go to help her elderly cousin Elizabeth, who for six months had been carrying John in her womb. In the support given by Mary to this relative who was, at an advanced age, living a delicate situation such as pregnancy, we see prefigured the whole action of the Church in support of life in need of care.

... And my greeting goes also to the sick and volunteers joining us today from Lourdes, Fatima, Czestochowa and from other Marian shrines, and to all those following us on radio and television, especially from clinics or from their homes. ...

Today's Liturgy of the Word presents two main

themes: the first is of a Marian character, and it unites the Gospel and the first reading, taken from the last chapter of the Book of Isaiah, as well as the Responsorial Psalm, taken from Judith's canticle of praise. ... In the memorial of the apparitions of Lourdes, a place chosen by Mary to manifest her maternal solicitude for the sick, the liturgy appropriately makes the Magnificat resonate, the canticle of the Virgin who exalts the wonders of God in the history of salvation: the humble and the indigent, as all those who fear God, experience his mercy, [he] who reverses earthly fortunes and thus demonstrates the holiness of the Creator and Redeemer. The Magnificat is not the canticle of those on whom fortune smiles, who always "prosper"; rather it is the thanksgiving of those who know the tragedies of life, but trust the redeeming work of God. It is a song that expresses the tested faith of generations of men and women who have placed their hope in God and have committed themselves personally, like Mary, to being of help to brothers in need. In the Magnificat we hear the voice of so many men and women saints of charity, I am thinking in particular of those who consumed their lives among the sick and suffering, such as Camillus of Lellis and John of God, Damien de Veuster and Benito Menni. Whoever spends a long time near persons who suffer, knows anguish and tears, but also the miracle of joy, fruit of love.

The maternity of the Church is a reflection of the solicitous love of God, of which the prophet Isaiah speaks: "As one whom his mother comforts, / so I will comfort you; / you shall be comforted in Jerusalem" (Isaiah 66:13). A maternity that speaks without words, which arouses consolation in hearts, a joy that paradoxically coexists with pain, with suffering. Like Mary, the Church bears within herself the tragedies of man, and the consolation of God, she keeps them together, in the course of her pilgrimage in history. ... May the Virgin Mary help us to live this mission fully. Amen!

"God Does Not Cease To Call Men And Women To His Service" - Address To Bishops Of Romania, Moldova, February 12, 2010

... While I invoke the intercession of the Mother of God and of the saints of your lands, I impart from the heart my blessing to you and to all the members of the People of God entrusted to your pastoral solicitude.

"Man Does Not Only Need To Be Fed Materially" - Address At Caritas Shelter, February 14, 2010

... May the Virgin Mary, "Salus populi romani," accompany you always with her maternal intercession and help each of you to make this place a house where there flourish the same virtues present in the holy house of Nazareth.

On The Beatitudes And Divine Justice Angelus Address, February 14, 2010

.... The liturgical year is a great journey of faith, which the Church undertakes, always preceded by the Virgin Mother Mary. ... Dear friends, let us turn to the Virgin Mary. All generations proclaim her "blessed," because she believed in the good news that the Lord announced (cf. Luke 1:45, 48). Let us allow ourselves to be led by her through the journey of Lent, to be liberated from the illusion of self-sufficiency, recognize that we need God, his mercy, and in this way enter into his Kingdom of justice, of love and of peace.

"Witness Awakens Vocations" - Message For The 47TH World Day Of Prayer For Vocations'

(to be celebrated on Good Shepherd Sunday, which falls on April 25 this year. The message was signed by the Pope on Nov. 13, and released on February 16 by the Vatican press office.)

... At the dawn of the new age, John the Baptist, by

devoting his whole life to preparing the way for Christ, bore witness that the promises of God are fulfilled in the Son of Mary of Nazareth. [...] May the Virgin Mary, Mother of the Church, watch over each tiny seed of a vocation in the hearts of those whom the Lord calls to follow him more closely, may she help it to grow into a mature tree, bearing much good fruit for the Church and for all humanity. With this prayer, to all of you I impart my Apostolic Blessing.

Man "Is Precious Dust In God's Eyes" General Audience, February 17, 2010

... Dear friends! While we hasten to undertake the austere Lenten journey, we want to invoke with particular confidence the protection and help of the Virgin Mary. May she, the first believer in Christ, be the one who accompanies us in these 40 days of intense prayer and sincere penance, to be able to celebrate, purified and completely renewed in mind and spirit, the great mystery of her Son's Easter.

"The World Improves Beginning With Ourselves" Angelus Address, February 21, 2010

... May the Virgin Mary help us so that, guided by the Holy Spirit, we live this time of grace with joy and fruit. May she especially intercede for me and my co-workers in the Roman Curia since this evening we will begin our retreat.

"Only In The 'WE' Of The Church Can We Truly Hear The Word" - Address At End Of Lenten Retreat, February 27, 2010

... From my place here I always saw the Mother of the Redeemer, the "Sedes Sapientiae," the living seat of wisdom, with Wisdom incarnate in her womb. And as we saw, St. Luke presents Mary precisely as a woman who listens from the heart, who is immersed in the Word of God, who listens to the Word, who meditates ("synballein") on it, composes and treasures it, who carries it in her heart. The Fathers

of the Church say that in the moment of the conception of the eternal Word in the womb of the Virgin the Holy Spirit entered into Mary through her ear. In listening she conceived the eternal Word, she gave her flesh to this Word. And thus she tells what it means to have a heart that listens.

Mary is surrounded here by the fathers and the mothers of the Church, by the communion of saints. And so we see and we have understood during these days that we cannot truly hear the Word in the isolated "I" but only in the "we" of the Church, in the "we" of the communion of saints. ...

**"The Joys Sown By God In Our Life Are Not
The Destination" Angelus Address,
February 28, 2010**

... May the Virgin Mary help us to live with intensity our moments of encounter with the Lord so that we can follow him every day with joy. To her we turn our gaze, invoking upon her with the prayer of the Angelus.