

EDITORIAL

Our Beloved Papa Benedict XVI, We Thank You!

On February 11, 2013, to the surprise of the world, our beloved Pope Benedict XVI announced his resignation from the papacy, effective 8:00 p.m. in Rome on February 28, 2013, and then begin a life of tranquility.

At that time on that day, his last as Successor of Peter, Pope Benedict XVI moved to Castel Gandolfo. The Holy See announced that the official title of the retired pontiff would be “Pope Emeritus,” and he would keep the name “Benedict XVI.”

As we await news about a new pontiff, we would like to say a few words to our beloved Pope Emeritus.

For your 62 years of priesthood, as a model of loyalty to Our Lord Jesus Christ, we thank you!

For your 36 years of episcopal service, as a dedicated minister, we thank you!

For your 24 years of service at the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, safeguarding the core values of the Church, we thank you!

For your bravery in taking up the burden as Shepherd of the Universal Church at the age of 78, when people should be enjoying a serene life after decades of hard work, we thank you!

For promulgating your letter to the faithful in China in 2007, giving a clear direction for the development of the Catholic Church in China, we thank you!

For elevating Bishop Joseph Zen to the cardinalate in 2006, bringing wisdom and insight concerning the Church in China to the Holy See, we thank you!

For elevating Bishop John Tong to the cardinalate in 2012, enabling this humble and simple pastor to share this honor in the Church, we thank you!

For your dedication to writing, teaching and advice, especially in the very touching Catholic social teaching "*Caritas in Veritate*," which points out important moral directives for the Church and for the world in this modern time, we thank you!

In this encyclical, you highlighted, "In poorer areas some groups enjoy a sort of 'super-development' of a wasteful and consumerist kind which forms an unacceptable contrast with the ongoing situations of dehumanizing deprivation." (CV, 22)

In mainland China, the per capita income is still very low compared to most countries, but some billionaires can afford to spend hundreds of thousands of dollars on a single meal. This kind of malpractice is severely undermining the ecology and human values. This kind of unequal distribution of resources is exactly what you would condemn. For this, we thank you!

During the eight years of your pontificate, though most of us have been doing our best as followers of Our Lord Jesus Christ, yet quite some people did violate Church teachings and have gone the wrong way. They have committed mistakes that were hurting others, and hurting the Church as well. You tried so hard to remedy the wounds and help the Church reassume the responsibility entrusted by Our Lord Jesus Christ, and let the beautiful promise "*Deus caritas est*" keep on working in this troublesome world. For this, we thank you!

During your eight years in office, the Church in China never lacked "shining testimony to their communities and to the universal Church." Unfortunately, however, there were also quite a few cases of negative examples, such as betraying the flock entrusted to them and carrying out illegitimate consecrations. You provided timely judgments about these cases to avoid further spreading the wrongdoing, but at the same time you left room for the wrong-doers to repent and come back. For this, we thank you!

For all your difficulties and sufferings in the past eight years, we thank you. May God reward you abundantly, giving you a peaceful and wonderful life of tranquility. Let us join you always in your continuous prayers for the Church. We thank you.

Anthony Lam
Holy Spirit Study Centre, March 3, 2013, Hong Kong