

On the Economic Crisis and Cultural Values "Providence Always Helps Those Who Do Good"

ROMANO CANAVESE, Italy, JULY 19, 2009 (Zenit.org).- Here is a translation of the public address Benedict XVI gave today before praying the midday Angelus in Romano Canavese, close to Les Combes in the Aosta Valley of northern Italy where he is spending some vacation days.

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Dear Brothers and Sisters!

I have come with great joy to your beautiful city, to your beautiful church, the native city of my chief colleague, Cardinal Tarcisio Bertone, secretary of state, with whom I had already worked for many years in the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith.

As you see, because of my accident, I am a bit limited in my movements, but my heart is fully present, and I am here with you with great joy!

At this moment I would like to say thank you with my whole heart to everyone: many have shown me, at this time, their closeness, their warmth, their affection and have prayed for me, and in this way they have reinforced the network of prayer that unites us in every part of the world.

First of all, I would like to say thank you to the doctors and the medical personnel of Aosta who have treated me with such diligence, with such competence and friendship and -- as you see -- with success -- we hope!

I would also like to say thank you to all the government and Church officials and to all the simple people who wrote me or showed me their affection and their closeness.

I would then like above all to greet your bishop, Bishop Arrigo Miglio, and thank him for the kind words, full of friendship, that also taught me a little about the historical and present situation of this city of yours. And I would also like to thank his Excellency Luigi Betazzi for his presence. I greet the mayor, who gave me a beautiful gift, [and] the civil and military authorities; I greet the pastor and the other priests, the men and women religious, the heads of the ecclesiastical associations and movements and all of the citizenry, with a special thought for the children, the young people, the families, the sick, the persons in need. To all and to each my most lively gratitude goes out for the welcome that you have reserved for me in this brief sojourn with you.

This morning you celebrated the Eucharist and Cardinal Tarcisio Bertone has certainly already explained the Word of God to you, which the liturgy offers for our meditation on this 16th Sunday of Ordinary Time. As the Lord invites the disciples to come away to listen to him in a more intimate setting, I also would like to be engaged with you, recalling that precisely listening to and welcoming the Gospel is what brought your local community about, whose name recalls the relationship of two millennia that the Canavese have with Rome. As his Excellency said, your land was bathed in the blood of martyrs at an early date. Among them was St. Solutore -- I must confess that until now I did not know his name but I am always grateful to discover new saint

intercessors! -- and together with St. Peter the Apostle, he is the patron of your church.

Your imposing parish church is an eloquent witness to a long history of faith. This church dominates a large part of the Canavese landscape, whose inhabitants are known for their love and attachment to work. Presently, however, I know that here too, in Ivrea, many families are experiencing a difficult economic situation because of the scarcity of jobs. In regard to this problem -- as his Excellency also recalled -- I have spoken many times and I wanted to treat it more deeply in my recent encyclical "Caritas in Veritate." I hope that it will be able to mobilize forces to renew the world!

Dear friends, do not be discouraged! Providence always helps those who do good and dedicate themselves to justice; it helps those who do not think only of themselves but of those who are worse off. And you know this well, because your grandparents had to emigrate because there was a lack of work, but then economic development brought well-being and others immigrated here from [other parts of] Italy and from foreign countries. The fundamental values of the family and respect for human life, sensibility for social justice, the capacity to endure toil and sacrifice, the strong link to Christian faith through parish life and especially through participation at Holy Mass, have been your strength over the centuries. These same values will permit today's generations to build their future with hope, giving life to a true solidarity and a fraternal society, in which all the various spheres, institutions and economy are permeated by an evangelical spirit.

I address the young people in a special way, who must think about education. Here, as everywhere, you must ask what sort of culture is emerging around you; what examples and models are proposed to you, and you must determine whether they are such as to encourage you to follow the ways of the Gospel and authentic freedom. Youth is full of resources, but it must be helped to overcome the temptation of easy and illusory ways, to find the road of true and abundant life.

Dear brothers and sisters! In this land of yours, rich in Christian traditions and human values, numerous vocations have flourished among men and women, especially for the Salesian family, like that of Cardinal Bertone, who was born in this very parish of yours, was baptized in this church, and grew up in a family where he assimilated a genuine faith. Your diocese owes much to the sons and daughters of Don Bosco, to their widespread and fruitful presence in this whole area from the time when the holy founder was still alive. May this be a further encouragement to your diocesan community to commit itself more and more to the field of education and vocational accompaniment. For this let us invoke the protection of Mary, the Virgin Assumed, Patroness of the Diocese, Help of Christians, a mother loved and venerated in a special way in numerous shrines dedicated to her among the mountains of the Gran Paradiso and on the plain of the Po. May her maternal presence show the way of hope to all and lead them along it as the star led the Magi. May the Madonna of the Star watch over all you from the hill that dominates Ivrea, Monte Stella, which is dedicated to her and to the Magi Kings. Let us now entrust ourselves to the Madonna with filial confidence, invoking her with the prayer of the Angelus.

[Translation by Joseph G. Trabbic]