



The Holy See

**LETTER OF HIS HOLINESS BENEDICT XVI
TO CARDINAL WALTER KASPER
ON THE OCCASION OF THE NINTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY
OF THE WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES
HELD IN PORTO ALEGRE (BRAZIL)**

*To My Venerable Brother
Cardinal WALTER KASPER
President
Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity*

I am pleased to greet all of you who are gathered for the Ninth General Assembly of the World Council of Churches being held in Porto Alegre to reflect on the theme: *God in your grace, transform the world*. In a special way I greet the General Secretary, Doctor Samuel Kobia, Archbishop Dadeus Grings, the Bishops of the Catholic Church in Brazil and all those who have worked for the realization of this important event. To all of you I express my heartfelt good wishes in the words of Saint Paul to the Romans: “*Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ*” (Rom 1:7).

Mindful of our shared baptismal faith in the Triune God, the Catholic Church and the World Council of Churches seek ways to cooperate ever more effectively in the task of witnessing to God's divine love. After forty years of fruitful collaboration, we look forward to continuing this journey of hope and promise, as we intensify our endeavours towards reaching that day when Christians are united in proclaiming the Gospel message of salvation to all. As we together make this journey, we must be open to the signs of divine Providence and the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, for we know that “the holy objective of reconciling all Christians in the unity of the one and the only Church of Christ transcends human powers and gifts” (*Unitatis Redintegratio*, 24). Our trust therefore is solely in the prayer of Christ himself: “Holy Father, keep them in thy name, which thou hast given me, that they may be one, even as we are one” (Jn 17:11).

During this General Assembly thousands of Christians join in this same prayer for unity. As we ask *God in his grace to transform the world*, we pray that he will bless our ecumenical dialogue with the progress we so ardently desire.

Assuring you of my spiritual closeness and reaffirming the Catholic Church's intention to continue a solid partnership with the World Council of Churches in its important contribution to the ecumenical movement, I invoke God's abundant blessings of peace and joy upon all of you.

From the Vatican, 25 January 2006, Feast of the Conversion of Saint Paul.

BENEDICTUS PP. XVI

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