



The Holy See

***LETTER OF HIS HOLINESS BENEDICT XVI
TO CARDINAL CORMAC MURPHY-O'CONNOR
ARCHBISHOP OF WESTMINSTER
ON THE 50th ANNIVERSARY OF HIS PRIESTLY ORDINATION***

*To Our Venerable Brother
Cormac Cardinal Murphy-O'Connor
Archbishop of Westminster*

Soon the whole Catholic community in Britain will experience a special joy when it will be able and indeed will want to honour you, our Venerable Brother, as a renowned spiritual leader. This is because you have been for a long time a distinguished teacher in the ways of the Gospel of Jesus Christ and now celebrate a truly memorable event in your life and ministry, namely, the 50th Anniversary of your Ordination as a Priest on 28 October 2006.

From afar, we have always and with admiration followed the course of your life, and so would wish also to share in the congratulations and the festivities of this occasion.

We are therefore writing this Letter in a spirit of sincere affection and brotherly love, so that we can also be near to you at this time and with the whole flock of the Diocese of Westminster which is so dear to you.

Together we give thanks to God, the giver of all blessings, for the great achievements of your long apostolate among your people and where you will surely be honoured and our joy shared by everyone.

We remember in particular three blessings of your priestly life.

First of all, we remember that you served happily as a priest of the Diocese of Portsmouth for over 20 years until Mother Church thought you worthy to be appointed as Bishops of Arundel and

Brighton.

Then, our Predecessor of recent memory, John Paul II, appointed you Metropolitan Archbishop of Westminster where you continually build up and renew the Church of God with worthy and fruitful initiatives and with great authority.

Likewise, dear Brother, here at Rome, we remember your particular service as Rector of the English College and the continual help you give to us in the tasks given to you as Cardinal and Member of several Congregations and Councils of our Apostolic See.

Thus, it is with a spirit of gratitude to God and in recognition of the gifts of your priesthood that we wish to be truly united with your clergy and faithful people as you celebrate the anniversary of your Ordination as a Priest.

For this reason, we warmly congratulate you and extend our best wishes for the future.

We pray that our Merciful Redeemer himself may even now reward and console you as you remember your past life, which is indeed a pledge of the eternal rewards in the Kingdom of Heaven.

With affection, we extend to you, dear Brother, our Apostolic Blessing.

From Castel Gandolfo, 30 September 2006, the Second of Our Pontificate.

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