



The Holy See

CONFERRAL OF THE HONORARY CITIZENSHIP OF CASTEL GANDOLFO ON MONSIGNOR GEORG RATZINGER

ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS BENEDICT XVI

Castel Gandolfo

Thursday, 21 August 2008

Your Eminences,

Your Excellences,

Authorities,

Dear Friends,

For me this is a cause for profound joy, that my brother now belongs to the renowned body of honorary citizens of this beautiful city. With this, Castel Gandolfo - if it is possible - becomes even dearer, nearer to my heart. Therefore thank you for this gesture, on my part as well.

From the beginning of my life my brother has always been for me not only a companion, but also a trustworthy guide. For me he has been a point of orientation and of reference with the clarity and determination of his decisions. He has always shown me the path to take, even in difficult situations.

You, Mr Mayor, with your beautiful words, have made me think back to years spent in Regensburg, where I listened to truly beautiful music in the cathedral, Sunday after Sunday; for me it was a comfort, a consolation, an intimate joy that reflected the beauty of God.

My brother has pointed out that since then, we have arrived at the last stage of our lives, at old age. The days left to live progressively diminish. But also in this stage my brother helps me to accept with serenity, with humility and with courage the weight of each day. I thank him.

I thank the city of Castel Gandolfo for this gesture, which is truly gratifying also for me. Let us conclude this beautiful ceremony with a Blessing.

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