



The Holy See

**ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS BENEDICT XVI
TO THE INSPECTORATE OF PUBLIC SECURITY AT THE VATICAN**

*Clementine Hall
Monday, 14 January 2013*

*Distinguished Gentlemen,
Dear Officials and Officers,*

I am very glad to repeat this meeting, now a tradition, for the exchange of New Year's greetings. I first extend my welcome and good wishes to Dr Enrico Avola, recently appointed Director General, whom I thank for the words he has just addressed to me, as well as to Prefect Salvatore Festa. With equal affection I greet the other members and collaborators of the Public Security Inspectorate at the Vatican.

I would like first of all to express my appreciation of the service you carry out with dedication and recognized professionalism in St Peter's Square and in the vicinity of the Vatican for the necessary surveillance of public order. I am thinking in particular of your work during the events for the faithful and pilgrims who come from all over the world to meet the Successor of Peter and visit the tomb of the Prince of the Apostles, as well as to pray at the graves of my Venerable Predecessors, especially that of [Bl. John Paul II](#).

Your service is also required on the occasion of my Pastoral Visits in Rome and during my [Apostolic Journeys in Italy](#). On this occasion I would like once again to express my esteem and to emphasize my heartfelt appreciation of the approach and spirit that animate your excellent and prompt service. While your style honours your identity as officials of the Italian State and members of the Church, it likewise attests to the good relations that exist between Italy and the Apostolic See.

I listened with interest to your Director's words. On behalf of you all he has wished to convey the sentiments, ideals and resolutions that inspire your life and your conduct in your daily duties. I warmly hope that your efforts, often made with sacrifice and risk, may always be inspired by a firm Christian faith, which is undoubtedly the most precious treasure and spiritual value that your families entrusted to you and that you are called to pass on to your own children. The [Year of Faith](#) that the entire Church is living is also an opportunity for you to take up the Gospel message and let it penetrate your consciences and your daily lives more deeply, witnessing courageously to the love of God in every environment and in your work too. In my [Message for the recent World Day of Peace](#), I stressed that "the many different efforts at peacemaking which abound in our world testify to mankind's innate vocation to peace. In every person the desire for peace is an essential aspiration which coincides in a certain way with the desire for a full, happy and successful human life" (n. 1).

May your presence, dear friends, be an ever more effective guarantee of the good order and serenity that are fundamental to building a calm and peaceful social life and, as well as being taught by the Gospel message, are a sign of authentic civilization. Together with these hopes, I would also like to offer your relatives my good wishes for the New Year. I commend them all to the maternal protection of the Virgin Most Holy, so that she may intercede with her divine Son to obtain for you prosperity, peace, harmony and the protection from all danger. May you also be accompanied by the Apostolic Blessing which I warmly impart to you all.