



11 February 2018

BENEDICT SAYS HE IS JOURNEYING TOWARDS GOD



"I am on a pilgrimage toward Home," retired Pope Benedict XVI wrote, capitalizing the Italian word "casa" or "home." Almost exactly five years after announcing his intention to be the first pope in nearly 600 years to resign, Pope Benedict wrote the letter to a journalist from the Italian newspaper Corriere della Sera. "I am touched to know how many of the readers of your newspaper want to know how I am experiencing this last period of my life," the 90-year-old

retired pope wrote. "In that regard, I can only say that, with the slow diminishing of my physical strength, inwardly I am on a pilgrimage toward Home."

"It is a great grace in this last, sometimes tiring stage of my journey, to be surrounded by a love and kindness that I never could have imagined," said the letter, written on stationery with the heading "Benedictus XVI, Papa emeritus." Massimo Franco, the journalist, said the letter, dated Feb. 5, was hand-delivered; the newspaper posted it online Feb. 6 and published it on the front page of the print edition Feb. 7.

During a meeting with cardinals Feb. 11, 2013, Pope Benedict stunned the cardinals and the world by saying, in Latin, "After having repeatedly examined my conscience before God, I have come to the certainty that my strengths, due to an advanced age, are no longer suited to an adequate exercise of the Petrine ministry." He set the date for his retirement as Feb. 28, 2013. And, seen off by dozens of weeping Vatican employees, he flew by helicopter to the papal villa at Castel Gandolfo, where he remained until after Pope Francis was elected. The day before he left was a Wednesday and the overflowing crowd in St. Peter's Square made it clear that it was anything but a normal Wednesday general audience. He told an estimated 150,000 people that his pontificate, which had lasted almost eight years, was a time of "joy and light, but also difficult moments." "The Lord has given us so many days of sun and light breeze, days in which the catch of fish has been abundant," he said, likening himself to St. Peter on the Sea of Galilee. "There have also been moments in which the waters were turbulent and the wind contrary, as throughout the history of the church, and the Lord seemed to be asleep," he said. "But I have always known that the Lord is in that boat and that the boat of the church is not mine, it is not ours, but it is his and he does not let it sink." A monastery in the Vatican Gardens was remodeled for Pope Benedict, and that is where he has lived for five years, reading, praying, listening to music and welcoming visitors. Until 2016, the retired pope occasionally would join Pope Francis at important public liturgies, including the Mass for the canonization of Pope John XXIII and Pope John Paul II in 2014 and for the opening of the 2015-2016 Year of Mercy. Pope Benedict also attended the ceremonies for the creation of new cardinals in 2014 and 2015. But as it became more and more difficult for Pope Benedict to walk, Pope Francis and the new cardinals would get in vans and drive the short distance to the Mater Ecclesiae monastery to pay their respects. The retired pope's letter to Corriere della Sera echoed remarks he had made the afternoon of his retirement when he arrived in Castel Gandolfo and greeted crowds there before the very dramatic, globally televised scene of Swiss Guards closing the massive doors to the villa and hanging up their halberds. "I am a simple pilgrim who begins the last stage of his pilgrimage on this earth," he told the people. "But with all my heart, with all my love, with my prayers, with my reflection, with all my interior strength, I still want to work for the common good and the good of the church and humanity." In "Last Testament," a book-length interview with journalist Peter Seewald published in 2016, Pope Benedict insisted he was not pressured by anyone or any particular event to resign, and he did not feel he was running away from any problem. However, he acknowledged "practical governance was not my forte, and this certainly was a weakness." Insisting "my hour had passed and I had given all I could," Pope Benedict said he never regretted resigning, but he did regret hurting friends and faithful who were "really distressed and felt forsaken" by his stepping down.

Courtesy Cindy Wooden, Catholic News Service

NOTICES

Money Matters

Sunday 04 February 2018

Thank you for your contributions.

1st Collection: p235
2nd Collection: p275
Share: p60
Family Offering: p372



Remembered at Mass

Sat 6pm: Tommy Butler, Birthday Remembrance, Breda Nolan 6th Anniversary, Patrick O'Reilly Birthday Remembrance.

Sun 11.30am: Sylvia Bennett - Holmes 10th Anniv, Lily & Chrisie Bennett, Lily Higginbotham.



Day of Prayer

Pope Francis' Worldwide Day of Prayer for Survivors and Victims of sexual abuse will be marked in Irish dioceses and parishes on the First Friday of Lent, Friday 16 February 2018.



Ash Wednesday 2018

Next Weds 14th February is Ash Weds, the beginning of Lent. Mass with Ashes will be celebrated at 10am.



St. Vincent de Paul Society

The monthly collection for the local St. Vincent de Paul Society takes place this weekend after masses.



Humanitarian Volunteers

are looking for volunteers to travel to Kenya on 17 June 2018. The volunteers will work on a humanitarian project for two weeks. No experience required and no age restrictions. Support

and Supervision provided. Volunteers will also visit the resting place of the Venerable Edel Quinn. No large fundraising. Volunteers will pay their own costs. If you can assist teaching English, or assist with sports, games, arts, crafts or more, then you can make a real impact on the lives of the poorest and those without hope. Contact Denis, Humanitarian Volunteers, 086 8520271.



Manreasa Retreat Centre

This weekend - Our New Earth Awareness: Responding to Pope Francis' call to ecological conversion - will be led by Donal Dorr and will guide participants in experiencing and expressing their faith and commitment in a way that takes account of our new earth awareness. Donal will lead the group through a reflection on how the 'ecological conversion' which Pope Francis has called for, will influence the way in which we express our faith in God, in Jesus, in the Holy Spirit, in the Christian Community, the Human Community, and the Community of the Earth - and how we commit ourselves to live out our ecological conversion.
8:00 pm Friday 2 March to 3:00 pm Sunday 4 March 2018
More info: +353 1 8331352



SIXTH SUNDAY ORDINARY TIME

A reading from the Book of Leviticus

The Lord said to Moses and Aaron, 'If a swelling or scab or shiny spot appears on a man's skin, a case of leprosy of the skin is to be suspected. The man must be taken to Aaron, the priest, or to one of the priests who are his sons. 'The man is leprous: he is unclean. The priest must declare him unclean; he is suffering from leprosy of the head. A man infected with leprosy must wear his clothing torn and his hair disordered; he must shield his upper lip and cry, "Unclean, unclean." As long as the disease lasts he must be unclean; and therefore he must live apart; he must live outside the camp.'

This is the Word of the Lord. Thanks be to God

Psalm 31

You are my refuge, O Lord; you fill me with the joy of salvation.

Happy the person whose offence is forgiven, whose sin is remitted. O happy the person to whom the Lord imputes no guilt, in whose spirit is no guile. R/

But now I have acknowledged my sins;
my guilt I did not hide.
I said: 'I will confess
my offence to the Lord.'
And you, Lord, have forgiven
the guilt of my sin. R/

Rejoice, rejoice in the Lord,
exult, you just!
O come, ring out your joy,
all you upright of heart. R/

A reading from the first letter of St. Paul to the Corinthians

Whatever you eat, whatever you drink, whatever you do at all, do it for the glory of God. Never do anything offensive to anyone - to Jews or Greeks or to the Church of God; just as I try to be helpful to everyone at all times, not anxious for my own advantage but for the advantage of everybody else so that they may be saved. Take me for your model, as I take Christ.

This is the Word of the Lord. Thanks be to God

Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia, alleluia!
A great prophet has appeared among us;
God has visited his people.
Alleluia! Alleluia!

Gospel

A reading from the Gospel of Mark

A leper came to Jesus and pleaded on his knees: 'If you want to' he said 'you can cure me.' Feeling sorry for him, Jesus stretched out his hand and touched him. 'Of course I want to!' he said. 'Be cured!' And the leprosy left him at once and he was cured. Jesus immediately sent him away and sternly ordered him, 'Mind you say nothing to anyone, but go and show yourself to the priest, and make the offering for your healing prescribed by Moses as evidence of your recovery.' The man went away, but then started talking about it freely and telling the story everywhere, so that Jesus could no longer go openly into any town, but had to stay outside in places where nobody lived. Even so, people from all around would come to him.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.
Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ



THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

"We can live this life to the fullest - with our feet firmly planted on the ground - and respond courageously to whatever new challenges come our way."

Pope Francis