Holiness is the Measure of the Christian Life {cimovie}Saintliness11.flv|Title|saintliness11.jpg{/

HOLINESS: THE MEASURE OF CHRISTIAN LIFE VATICAN CITY, 13 APR 2011 (VIS) -

During this Wednesday's general audiences, Benedict XVI concluded the cycle of catechesis he has dedicated
over the course of two years to the many saints who "with their faith, with their charity and with their lives,
have been beacons for many generations, and are thus also for us".

"Often we are led to believe that sainthood is reserved to a few chosen ones", the Pope said. Nonetheless,
"saintliness, the fullness of Christian life, does not consist in the achievement of extraordinary feats, but in
uniting oneself with Christ... in making His disposition ... His behaviour ... our own. ... The II Vatican
Council, in the Constitution of the Church, speaks clearly of the universal call to sainthood, affirming that
no-one is excluded".

However, a holy life, the Pope continued, "is not principally the result of our efforts, as it is God ... who
renders us holy, and it is the action of his Spirit which animates us from within, the same life of Christ
resurrected which is communicated to us and which transforms us ... Saintliness is therefore ultimately rooted
in baptismal grace, in being introduced to the paschal mystery of Christ, by which His Spirit, His resurrected
life, is communicated to us. ... But God always respects our freedom and asks us to accept this gift and to live
with the demands it brings, asks that we may allow ourselves to be transformed by the action of the Holy
Spirit, conforming our will to the will of God".

"How can it be that our way of thinking and our actions become the thought and action of Christ?" asked the
Pope. "Once again, the II Vatican Council offers us clear guidance; it tells us that Christian holiness is none
other than charity, fully experienced". However, in order that charity might, "like a good seed, grow in the
soul and there bear fruit, the faithful must listen gladly to the Word of God and, by its grace, carry out His
will through their works, participate frequently in the sacraments, above all the Eucharist and the Holy
Liturgy; they must constantly apply themselves in prayer, in the abnegation of their selves, in the active

service of their brothers and in the exercise of every virtue. ... For this reason the true disciple of Christ is
characterised by his charity both toward God and toward his neighbour".

"The Church, during the Liturgical Year, invites us to commemorate an array of saints who have fully lived
in charity, and have loved and followed Christ in their everyday lives. They show us that it is possible to
follow this path. ... We are all called to saintliness: it is the very measure of Christian life".

Benedict XVI concluded by inviting us all to open ourselves "to the action of the Holy Spirit, which
transforms our life, so that we too may become tesserae in the great mosaic of sainthood that God creates
throughout history".