

Address to the Sick at Divine Mercy Shrine "You Are Eloquent Witnesses of God's Mercy"

KRAKOW, Poland, MAY 28, 2006 (Zenit.org)- Benedict XVI visited the Shrine of Divine Mercy in Lagiewniki on Saturday, after his visit to the Shrine of Our Lady of Kalwaria.

At Lagiewniki the Pope prayed at the tomb of St. Faustina Kowalska, where Karol Wojtyla often went as a laborer and later as an underground seminarian.

Benedict XVI then went to the basilica, where 800 sick people awaited him. Here is a Vatican translation of his address to them.

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Dear Brothers and Sisters,

I am very pleased to be able to meet you during my visit here to the Shrine of Divine Mercy. I extend heartfelt greetings to all of you: to the sick, their caretakers, the priests engaged in pastoral ministry at the shrine, to the Sisters of Our Lady of Mercy, to the members of the Faustinum and to all those present.

On this occasion we encounter two mysteries: the mystery of human suffering and the mystery of Divine Mercy. At first sight these two mysteries seem to be opposed to one another. But when we study them more deeply in the light of faith, we find that they are placed in reciprocal harmony through the mystery of the Cross of Christ. As Pope John Paul II said in this place: "the Cross is the most profound bowing down of the Divinity toward man the Cross is like a touch of eternal love on the most painful wounds of humanity's earthly existence" (Aug. 17, 2002).

Dear friends who are sick, who are marked by suffering in body or soul, you are most closely united to the Cross of Christ, and at the same time, you are the most eloquent witnesses of God's mercy. Through you and through your suffering, he bows down toward humanity with love. You who say in silence: "Jesus, I trust in you" teach us that there is no faith more profound, no hope more alive and no love more ardent than the faith, hope and love of a person who in the midst of suffering places himself securely in God's hands. May the human hands of those who care for you in the name of mercy be an extension of the open hands of God.

I would so willingly embrace each one of you. But since this is impossible, I draw you spiritually to my heart, and I impart my blessing in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

[Original text in Polish; translation issued by the Holy See]

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