

# PRESS INFORMATION PAPAL VISIT 2011

25 September 2011

## DAILY SUMMARY

### **Benedict XVI appeals for unity in faith - Bishops present a composition to the Pope**

On Sunday morning, under a bright blue sky, Pope Benedict XVI celebrated his last Holy Mass during his visit to Germany at Freiburg airfield. In the presence of about 100,000 participants he called upon the priests, religious and lay people in Germany to be “firmly united in Christ“ and to work together in fidelity to their respective vocations. At noon, the Pope met for lunch with the bishops in and out of office of his home country. The bishops presented Benedict XVI their official gift, a four-minute piece of music for choir, wind instruments, percussion and organ, especially composed for this occasion.

During the Mass, Benedict XVI appealed to parishes, communities and movements to support and enrich each other. The Church in Germany will „continue to be a blessing for the entire Catholic world: if she remains faithfully united with the Successors of Saint Peter and the Apostles, if she fosters international cooperation „and allows herself to be infected by the joy that marks the faith of these young Churches“, the Pope said in his homily.

To his appeal for unity Benedict XVI added a call to humility. Christian life is “existing for others, humble service of neighbour and of the common good“. Humility is a virtue that had never enjoyed great esteem. But Christians know that this virtue is “so to speak, the oil that makes the process of dialogue fruitful, cooperation simple and unity sincere“, the Pope concluded.

The Pope expressed his gratitude and appreciation to all those working in Caritas Germany, which has its head office in Freiburg, and to the staff in other church organizations. Without them “life in the parishes and in the entire Church would be hard to imagine.“ At the same time he asked them to deepen their own personal relationship with God. Love of neighbour is more than a “technical service“, he stated and continued that the renewal of the Church, „in the last analysis, will only come about through openness to conversion and through renewed faith.“ 97 bishops from Germany and abroad attended this Holy Mass.

### **Pope’s motto of ordination set to music**

During lunch the President of the German Bishops’ Conference, Archbishop Dr Robert Zollitsch, presented to the Head of the Catholic Church the official gift of the German bishops, a piece of music especially composed for this occasion.



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This is a musical setting of the text chosen by young Joseph Ratzinger when he held his first mass. The motto of his ordination to priesthood, sixty years ago in Freising “Domineering over your faith is not my purpose. I prefer to work with you toward your happiness”, was set to music by the director of music at Eichstätt Cathedral, Christian Matthias Heiß. As a schoolboy, Heiß was a member of the Regensburger Domspatzen, the choir at that time directed by the Pope’s brother, director of music Georg Ratzinger.

The four-minute composition for choir, wind instruments, percussion and organ will be given its first public performance at the autumn plenary assembly of the German Bishops’ Conference in Fulda on 5 October 2011. Zollitsch handed the Pope the unique example of the score. Later the Pope will receive a CD of the piece of music with the Latin title “Non quia dominamur”.

Heiß was born in 1967 and studied church music and organ at the Munich academy of music. Afterwards the composer was musical assistant at Eichstätt Cathedral before he started working as church musician in Ravensburg. As of 1999 he was organist at Eichstätt Cathedral. In autumn 2002 he was appointed director of music at Eichstätt.

### **Pope ends his visit to Germany**

At 07.36 p.m. the Lufthansa Airbus A320 took off from the Freiburg-Lahr airport towards Rome with the Head of the Catholic Church on board. He was given a farewell by the Federal President Christian Wulff, Federal Minister of the Interior Hans-Peter Friedrich, the Minister President of Baden-Württemberg Winfried Kretschmann, the Papal Ambassador to the Federal Republic, Archbishop Dr Jean-Claude Périsset, the President of the German Bishops’ Conference Archbishop Robert Zollitsch, and further representatives of the German Episcopate.

During the farewell ceremony at the airport, the Pope thanked all persons involved for “these days, so moving and eventful, spent in my native land”. The numerous encounters with politicians, representatives of the Church and the faithful gave him “confidence for the future of the Church and of Christianity in Germany”, he said. Benedict XVI encouraged the Church in Germany “to pursue with resolute confidence the path of faith which leads people back to their roots, to the heart of the Good News of Christ.” The Pope expressed his hope “that the enthusiasm of small communities of believers spreads within a pluralistic society and makes others curious”.

Before, the Federal President had thanked Benedict XVI for his visit saying that the Pope had gifted the people with “touching moments which will remain unforgettable for all of us”. Wulff stressed that the unity of denominations and the dialogue with religions were a matter of great concern to the Pope. He added that during his visit the Pope had “set many signals, provided orientation and standards which are not always comfortable but which give us –

Catholics and other Christians as well as Non-Christians - something to think about". The Pope faced the concerns and questions of the people and "built a few bridges", Wulff emphasized and continued: "Our wish is that you may continue this path with courage, that you will help to unite what is divided, that you will contribute to the Church remaining close to the people and that the questions addressed to you in these days will continue to touch you." The Federal President ended his farewell address with an invitation to the Pope to come back to Germany, maybe even for a private visit.

Wulff had welcomed the Pope at the beginning of his visit to Germany on Thursday morning at Berlin-Tegel airport and he has accompanied him on parts of his journey from Berlin to Erfurt, to Eichsfeld in Thuringia and finally to Freiburg.

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