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## PONTIFF SENDS CHRISTMAS NOTE TO GYPSY CHILDREN

VATICAN CITY, DEC. 24, 2010 ([Zenit.org](http://www.zenit.org)).- Benedict XVI sent a letter of gratitude to a school for gypsy children, thanking the students for their "kind greetings on the occasion of these celebrations of Christmas and the New Year."

The note went to the Mother Petra school for gypsy children in Valencia's town of Torrent, the archdiocese's AVAN agency reported.

In the letter, the Holy Father expresses his hope that "the encounter with Jesus Christ will awaken the desire to hear the Word of God and meditate on it, so that it will continue to dwell within us, living and speaking to us throughout all the days of our life."

At the end of his letter, the Pontiff imparted his apostolic blessing "to the students, teachers and parents" of the school.

The Mother Petra school is directed by Sister Gertrudis Rol of the St. Joseph of the Mountain Mothers of the Helpless Congregation. It has more than 200 students, most of whom are from the city of Valencia and nearby towns. It also offers technological training to more than 50 young people between 16 and 30 years of age, who learn dressmaking, hairdressing, gardening and mechanics.