

Pope: Church Has Contribution to Make in Africa

Sends Letter to German President

VATICAN CITY, JUNE 22, 2009 ([Zenit.org](http://www.zenit.org)).- The Church has a decisive contribution to offer Africa in terms of a type of education that works from the inside out, says Benedict XVI.

This type of education would propel Africans to be the protagonists of their own development, the Pope wrote in a letter to the president of Germany, Horst Köhler.

Köhler had written first to the Pontiff in March to share his "ideas on the development of Africa" and his "perspectives on the future of the continent." The Holy Father responded upon returning from his trip to Angola and Cameroon. L'Osservatore Romano published the letter Saturday.

"I took your reflections with me on my journey," The Pontiff said. "Today, upon my return, I am able to confirm your experiences with full conviction."

"Africa is a young continent, full of the joy of life and confidence, with great creative potential," he continued. "Of course, foreign interests and the tensions of its own history still weigh on the present and threaten the future.

"But the living faith, young moral strength and growing intellectual competency create a climate of hope that withstands difficulties, and overcomes them."

In his letter, the Pope assured that the Church "can offer a decisive contribution and the necessary human formation."

"The Church seeks to form consciences and work from the inside out," he explained, "so that Africans, as the protagonists of the development of their countries, can use their numerous gifts in favor of the cultivation of society and peace."

Benedict XVI also underlined that "conduct that is honest and marked by solidarity, and that does not give in to the law of the strongest or in seeking one's own interests, is hope in action, and a seed that carries within itself a better future."

"Upon this foundation," the Pope said, "I have been able to encourage the Church in Africa to continue helping the victims of violence and illnesses such as AIDS, malaria, and tuberculosis, and fighting efficiently against these terrible difficulties."

He concluded: "I have been able to say that the Church -- stirring up in hearts love for those who suffer, and the willingness to help -- does much more against these illnesses than many other institutions."

© Innovative Media, Inc.

Reprinting ZENIT's articles requires written permission from the [editor](http://www.zenit.org).