



ZE10020412 - 2010-02-04

Permalink: <http://www.zenit.org/article-28260?l=english>

SPORT A BUILDING BLOCK OF PEACE, SAYS POPE

Sends Greeting to Vancouver Ahead of Winter Olympics

VATICAN CITY, FEB. 4, 2010 ([Zenit.org](http://www.zenit.org)).- In a message to the host dioceses of the 2010 Winter Olympics and Paralympics, Benedict XVI said that he hopes sport will continue to be a "building block" of peace and friendship among peoples.

The Pope sent the message Dec. 30 to Archbishop J. Michael Miller of Vancouver, British Columbia. The Canadian city will host to the XXI Winter Olympic Games beginning Feb. 12.

In the letter the Pontiff also greeted Bishop David Monroe of Kamloops, which will be the setting for the X Paralympics for athletes with physical and visual disabilities. The Paralympics is set for March.

The Pontiff also greeted "the participating athletes, the organizers and the many community volunteers who are generously cooperating in the celebration of the significant international event."

"Such an important occurrence for both athletes and spectators allows me to recall how sport 'can make an effective contribution to peaceful understanding between peoples and to establishing the new civilization of love,'" the Holy Father noted, quoting Pope John Paul II.

"In this light," Benedict XVI continued, "may sport always be a valued building block of peace and friendship between peoples and nations."

The Pope praised the ecumenical initiative More Than Gold, which is "intended to provide spiritual and material assistance to visitors, participants and volunteers alike."

He said, "I pray that all who avail themselves of this service will be confirmed in their love of God and neighbor."

The Holy Father then offered his blessing "upon all associated with the celebration of the XXI Winter Olympic Games and the X Paralympic Winter Games."
