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## POPE MOURNS LEADER IN JEWISH-CATHOLIC DIALOGUE

### **Bishop Alberto Ablondi Dead at 85**

VATICAN CITY, AUG. 24, 2010 ([Zenit.org](http://www.zenit.org)).- Benedict XVI is expressing his grief at the death of a retired bishop of Livorno, Italy, Alberto Ablondi, who died Saturday at age 85.

The prelate was a protagonist in interreligious and ecumenical dialogue.

In a telegram sent to Bishop Simone Giusti of Livorno, the Pope's secretary of state, Cardinal Tarcisio Bertone, said the Holy Father "participates spiritually in the grief" that has stricken the diocesan community.

"While recalling [the bishop's] generous ministry, especially beneficial in the commitment to the ecumenical realm and fruitful in the biblical apostolate, [the Pontiff] raises fervent prayers of suffrage, entrusting him to the maternal intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary," the papal statement added.

Alberto Ablondi was born in 1924 in Milan and ordained in 1947. He served for 30 years as the bishop of Livorno. He also served as vice-president of the Italian Episcopal Conference, and was a member of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, president of the World Catholic Federation for the Biblical Apostolate [now the Catholic Biblical Federation] and vice-president for Europe of the United Bible Societies.

Weighty contribution

Bishop Brian Farrell, secretary of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, praised Bishop Ablondi's service in a statement reported by the SIR news agency.

Bishop Farrell referred to the prelate as an "enlightened interpreter and tireless promoter of

the commitment of the Catholic Church -- as formally sanctioned by the Second Vatican Council and by all the Supreme Pontiffs from that time up to today -- to the search for full communion of all the baptized and of renewed religious relations with the Jewish people, as well as the diffusion of sacred Scripture."

"All of us are witnesses of his great love of the Church and of his undying trust that God is raising her up as the common home of all, able to embrace in her communion all men and women of good will, especially the little ones and the forgotten," Bishop Farrell added.

Bishop Ablondi's successor in the Diocese of Livorno, retired Bishop Diego Coletti, recalled him as an "attentive and generous pastor."

Lauding his contribution to ecumenical and interreligious work, Bishop Coletti said, "But it is above all humanly that his figure was a splendid testimony of faith and of attention to people, with particular predilection in caring for personal relationships."