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AIDE: POPE BRINGS REAL JESUS TO LIGHT

Father Lombardi Comments on "Jesus of Nazareth"

VATICAN CITY, MARCH 13, 2011 ([Zenit.org](http://www.zenit.org)).- Benedict XVI's second volume of "Jesus of Nazareth" is a work of "historical" importance that succeeds in helping the world rediscover the figure of Jesus, says a Vatican spokesman.

Jesuit Father Federico Lombardi, director of the Vatican's press office, said this in the most recent episode of the Vatican television program "Octava Dies" in which he commented on "Jesus of Nazareth Part II: Holy Week -- From the Entrance into Jerusalem to the Resurrection." The volume was release worldwide Thursday.

The spokesman said he sees the book as historical because it "inaugurates a new era" of biblical interpretation, based not only on rigorous historical-critical analysis, but also on the dimension that opens up faith.

"The scholar Joseph Ratzinger, who is also the Shepherd of the Universal Church, guides us in a skilled, deep reading that is also consistent with the Christian faith and its tradition," the Jesuit explained. "It is a new and lived synthesis between the historical-critical culture and that of the faith, in which the texts of the Gospel were born and in which we find the only way to understand them properly."

A book for dialogue

In the second place, Father Lombardi explained that it is a book "made for dialogue": "The figure of Jesus is presented to everyone as the great answer of God to the deepest and most real questions of human existence in every age, including those crucial ones about evil, suffering and death.

"It is a gift that corresponds to the meaning itself of Jesus, which can be accepted or rejected, but it is always 'blood poured out for everyone' and never 'against' anyone."

The spokesman noted that with this volume, centered on the heart of the event and meaning of the life of Jesus -- the passion and the resurrection -- a great wish of the Pope is fulfilled, the culmination of his "long interior journey" in search of the "face of the Lord."

And whoever wants to share in that journey, he added, is free to participate.

"We know that it cost the Pope a great deal of effort to finish it despite the weighty commitments of his daily service," Father Lombardi concluded. "It is a gift for our joy."

