

Pontiff Asks World to Support Africa's Development

Urges Catholics to Be Leaven of Hope on Continent

LUANDA, Angola, MARCH 22, 2009 ([Zenit.org](http://www.zenit.org)).- Benedict XVI is closing his pastoral visit asking Africans to be peacemakers and bearers of hope to their neighbors, and asking other nations to support this continent's efforts.

The Pope said this today before leading the Angelus at Cimangola field, on the outskirts of Luanda, where he had just celebrated a Mass with one million people.

"In this Angelus prayer," he noted, "we recall Mary's complete 'yes' to the will of God."

He continued: "Through Mary's obedience of faith, the Son of God came into the world to bring us forgiveness, salvation and life in abundance.

"By becoming a man like us in all things but sin, Christ taught us the dignity and worth of each member of the human family."

The Pontiff affirmed: "Our prayer rises today from Angola, from Africa, and embraces the whole world.

"May the men and women from throughout the world who join us in our prayer, turn their eyes to Africa, to this great Continent so filled with hope, yet so thirsty for justice, for peace, for a sound and integral development that can ensure a future of progress and peace for its people."

Leaven

He urged his listeners, "Inspired by faith in God and trust in Christ's promises, may the Catholics of this Continent become ever more fully a leaven of evangelical hope for all people of good will who love Africa, who are committed to the material and spiritual advancement of its children, and the spread of freedom, prosperity, justice and solidarity in the pursuit of the common good."

The Holy Father added, "May the Holy Mother of God, who points us to her Son, our brother, remind Christians everywhere of our duty to love our neighbor, to be peacemakers, to be the first to forgive those who have sinned against us, even as we have been forgiven."

"Here in Southern Africa," he said, "let us ask our Lady in a particular way to intercede for peace, the conversion of hearts, and an end to the conflict in the neighboring Great Lakes region."

Benedict XVI concluded, "May her Son, the Prince of Peace, bring healing to the suffering, consolation to those who mourn, and strength to all who carry forward the difficult process of dialogue, negotiation and the cessation of violence."

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