



# The Holy See

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***ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS BENEDICT XVI  
TO THE SWISS GUARD RECRUITS AND THEIR RELATIVES  
ON THE OCCASION OF THE SWEARING-IN CEREMONY***

*Clementine Hall  
Friday, 7 May 2010*

*Dear Mr Commandant,  
Reverend Chaplain,  
Dear Guards,  
Dear Relatives,*

I welcome you all with joy and greet in particular the new recruits who are gathered here together with their parents and friends.

You may rightly be proud of the fact that by the oath you have taken you have become part of a guard corps with a long history. You have just put on the famous uniform, you appear to everyone as Swiss Guards, and people recognize you and pay attention to you. From this day you will benefit from the centuries-old skill and all the means available for carrying out your task. What is passed on to you today makes you custodians of a tradition and heralds of a practical knowledge entrusted to you. It is your duty to continue to assert these and make them known. By this will be judged your responsibility, and this requires you to make an extraordinary gift of yourselves. The Successor of Peter sees true support in you and entrusts himself to your vigilance. I sincerely wish that through this guard service you will perpetuate the inheritance you have received from your predecessors and that you will develop together as men and as Christians.

By entering the Pontifical Swiss Guard Corps, you are indirectly but really associated with the service of Peter in the Church. From this day forth, I ask you in your meditation on the word of God to pay great attention to the Apostle Peter when, after Christ's Resurrection, he devoted himself to carrying out the mission that the Lord had entrusted to him. These passages from Scripture will

illuminate the meaning of your noble engagement, particularly at times of possible weariness or fatigue. In the Book of the Acts of the Apostles we read that Peter went throughout Judea, visiting the faithful (cf. Acts 9: 32). The first of the Apostles thus expresses in practice his concern for everyone. The Pope would like to pay the same attention to all the Churches and to every member of the faithful, and also to every person who expects something of the Church. Close to the Successor of Peter, the charity that enlivens your soul is impelled to become universal. Your hearts are called to grow. Your service will bring you to discover in the faces of every man and every woman pilgrims who, on their way, expect to meet another face through which they may be granted a living sign of the Lord of every life and every grace.

We know that all we do for the Name of Jesus, however humble it may be, transforms us and configures us a little more closely to the new man regenerated in Christ. Thus your service in favour of the Petrine Ministry will give you a keener sense of catholicity, together with a deeper perception of the dignity of the person who passes close to you and seeks within himself the way to eternal life. Lived with professional conscientiousness and a sense of the supernatural, your duty will also prepare you for future commitments, personal and public, which you will take up when you leave the service, and will enable you to assume them as true disciples of the Lord.

As I invoke the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary and of your holy Patrons Sebastian, Martin and Nicholas of Flüe, I warmly impart an affectionate Apostolic Blessing to you, to your families, to your friends and to all who have gathered around you at the moment of your swearing-in.

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