



# The Holy See

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APOSTOLIC JOURNEY TO MEXICO AND THE REPUBLIC OF CUBA

(MARCH 23-29, 2012)

## DEPARTURE CEREMONY

### *ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS BENEDICT XVI*

*International Airport of El Bajío*

*Monday, 26 March 2012*

**[[Video](#)]**

*Mr President,  
Distinguished Authorities,  
Your Eminences,  
Dear Brother Bishops,  
Dear Mexican friends,*

My brief but intense visit to Mexico is now coming to an end. Yet this is not the end of my affection and my closeness to a country so very dear to me. I leave full of unforgettable experiences, not the least of which are the innumerable courtesies and signs of affection which I have received. With all my heart I thank the President for his kind words to me, and for all that the authorities have done for this memorable Journey. And I thank the many people who have helped, even in the smallest details, to make the events of these days go smoothly. I beg the Lord that all these efforts may not be in vain, and that with his help, they may produce abundant and long-lasting fruits in the life of faith, hope and charity of León and Guanajuato, in Mexico and the other countries of Latin America and the Caribbean.

Recognizing the faith in Jesus Christ which I have felt resounding in your hearts, and your affectionate devotion to his Mother, invoked here with beautiful titles like Our Lady of Guadalupe

and Our Lady of Light, a light I have seen reflected in your faces, I wish to reiterate clearly and with vigour a plea to the Mexican people to remain faithful to yourselves, not to let yourselves be intimidated by the powers of evil, but to be valiant and to work to ensure that the sap of your Christian roots may nourish your present and your future.

I have also seen for myself expressions of concern for various aspects of the life in this beloved country, some more recent and others longstanding, which continue to cause such great distress. I take them with me as well, as I share in the joys and the suffering of my Mexican brothers and sisters, so as to place them in prayer at the foot of the Cross, in the heart of Christ, from which flow the blood and water of redemption.

In these circumstances, I strongly urge Mexican Catholics, and all men and women of good will, not to yield to a utilitarian mentality which always leads to the sacrifice of the weakest and most defenceless. I invite you to a common effort so that society can be renewed from the ground up, in order to attain a life of dignity, justice and peace for everyone. For Catholics, this contribution to the common good is also a requirement of that essential dimension of the Gospel which is human promotion and a supreme expression of charity. For this reason, the Church exhorts all her faithful to be good citizens, conscious of their responsibility to be concerned for the good of all, both in their personal lives and throughout society.

Dear Mexican friends, I say to you “Adios!” in the traditional sense of this fine Hispanic expression: remain with God! Yes, “Adios!”; for ever in the love of Christ, in which we meet each other and will again meet with one another. May the Lord bless you and may Mary Most Holy protect you! Thank you!