

Almsgiving Brings Us Closer to God, Says Pope

Notes Joy of Sharing Goods With Others

VATICAN CITY, MARCH 11, 2011 ([Zenit.org](http://www.zenit.org)).- Benedict XVI is encouraging charitable giving, noting that this brings us closer to God and facilitates our own conversion.

The Pope stated this today in an audience with members of the Belgian charitable association Pro Petri Sede.

He acknowledged in particular a donation brought by the association that will allow the Pontiff "to help populations harshly tried in recent times, especially those of Haiti."

"Contributing to the struggle against poverty, sharing with almsgiving, we come close to others," the Holy Father stated.

He pointed out that "a gift is nothing without the love that animates it and the fraternal bonds it weaves."

"Acting thus with charity," Benedict XVI said, "we express the truth of our being as there is more joy in giving than in receiving, and we manifest the unity of the double commandment to love."

Fullness of life

"In fact, sharing with our neighbor," he added, "we experience through the joy received, that fullness of life comes from love of God."

"Thus alms bring us closer to God and invite us to conversion," the Pope said.

He affirmed that "the service of charity belongs to the very nature of the Church."

"It is a lively expression of God's solicitude for all men," the Pontiff observed.

He noted that "by contributing indispensable material aid, the Church can also offer care of the heart and the love of which persons being tested are in so much need."

The Holy Father thanked the charitable group for their support "in the struggle against what debases and degrades the dignity of every person created in the image of God."

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