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| **BENEDICT XVI INVITES THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY TO HELP THE COUNTRIES OF THE SAHEL**  Vatican City, 10 February 2010 (VIS) - This morning in the Vatican, the Holy Father received in audience twenty-five members of the John Paul II Foundation for the Sahel (the sub-Saharan region of Africa which includes countries on the west coast and central part of the continent). The institution came into being following John Paul II's first trip to Africa and was formally established with a Chirograph on 22 February 1984. It is involved in managing and protecting natural resources, the struggle against drought and desertification, rural development and the fight against poverty, through the involvement of local people.  In his address Benedict XVI recalled how in recent months the Sahel "has been seriously threatened by a significant drop in food supplies and famine, caused by low rainfall and the consequent inexorable advance of the desert. I exhort the international community to concern itself with the extreme poverty of these peoples, whose living conditions are deteriorating. And I encourage and support the efforts made by the ecclesial organisations which operate in this field".  In some of the countries in which the Foundation operates Islam is also present. In this context Benedict XVI expressed his satisfaction at the good relations that exist with Muslims, and noted "the importance of bearing witness to the fact that Christ lives, and that His love goes beyond all religions, races and cultures".  In conclusion the Pope highlighted how "Africa is the continent of hope for the Church, ... the continent of the future". |
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| **CONSISTORY FOR CANONISATION OF SEVEN BLESSEDS, COURTESY VISITS OF NEW CARDINALS**  Vatican City, 10 February 2010 (VIS) - In St. Peter's Basilica at 10.30 a.m. on Saturday 18 February Benedict XVI will celebrate an ordinary public consistory for the creation of twenty-two new cardinals during which he will impose the biretta, consign the ring and assign them their title or diaconate, according to a communique released today by the Office of Liturgical Celebrations of the Supreme Pontiff.  At the end of the ceremony, the Holy Father will celebrate an ordinary public consistory for the canonisation of the following Blesseds: Jacques Berthieu, French martyr and priest of the Society of Jesus (Jesuits); Pedro Calungsod, Filipino lay catechist and martyr; Giovanni Battista Piamarta, Italian priest and founder of the Congregation of the Holy Family of Nazareth and of the Congregation of the Humble Sister Servants of the Lord; Maria del Carmen (nee Maria Salles y Barangueras), Spanish foundress of the Conceptionist Missionary Sisters of Teaching; Maria Anna Cope (nee Barbara), German religious of the Sisters of the Third Order of St. Francis in Syracuse U.S.A.; Kateri Tekakwitha, American laywoman, and Anna Schaffer, German laywoman.  That same afternoon, from 4.30 to 6.30 p.m. in various rooms of the Apostolic Palace, the new cardinals will receive all those who wish to pay them a courtesy visit. A list of these locations follows:  Atrium of the Paul VI Hall: Cardinals Joao Braz de Aviz, Edwin Frederick O'Brien, George Alencherry, Lucian Muresan, Julien Ries and Prosper Grech, O.S.A.  Paul VI Hall: Cardinals Francesco Coccopalmerio, Thomas Christopher Collins, Dominik Jaroslav Duka O.P., Willem Jacobus Eijk, Giuseppe Betori, Timothy Michael Dolan, Rainer Maria Woelki and John Tong Hon.  Sala Regia of the Apostolic Palace: Cardinals Fernando Filoni, Manuel Monteiro de Castro and Giuseppe Bertello.  Galleria Lapidaria of the Apostolic Palace: Cardinals Santos Abril y Castello and Antonio Maria Veglio.  Sala Ducale of the Apostolic Palace: Cardinals Domenico Calcagno and Giuseppe Versaldi.  Also in St. Peter's Basilica, at 9.30 a.m. on Sunday 19 February, Solemnity of the Cathedra of St. Peter, the Holy Father will preside at a concelebrated Mass with the new cardinals. |
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| **AUDIENCES**  Vatican City, 10 February 2010 (VIS) - The Holy Father today received in audience:  - Cardinal Marc Ouellet P.S.S., prefect of the Congregation for Bishops.  - Eight prelates of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, on their "ad limina" visit:  - Archbishop Jerome Edward Listecki of Milwaukee, accompanied by Auxiliary Bishop Donald J. Hying and former Auxiliary Bishop Richard John Sklba.  - Bishop David Laurin Ricken of Green Bay, accompanied by Bishop emeritus Robert Joseph Banks.  - Bishop William Patrick Callahan O.F.M. Conv. of La Crosse.  - Bishop Robert Charles Morlino of Madison.  - Bishop Peter F. Christensen of Superior. |
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| **OTHER PONTIFICAL ACTS**  Vatican City, 10 February 2010 (VIS) - The Holy Father appointed:  - Bishop Marco Perez Caicedo, auxiliary of Guayaquil, Ecuador, as bishop of Babahoyo (area 6,531, population 788,000, Catholics 583,000, priests 42, religious 49), Ecuador.  - Archbishop Giovanni d'Aniello, apostolic nuncio to Thailand and Cambodia, and apostolic delegate to Myanmar and Laos, as apostolic nuncio to Brazil.  - Bishop Paolo Mietto C.S.I., apostolic vicar emeritus of Napo, Ecuador, as apostolic administrator of San Miguel de Sucumbios, Ecuador. |