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VATICAN - The feelings of the Secretary of the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples, His Exc. Mgr. Savio Hon Tai Fai, after the announcement of the Pope's resignation

Vatican City (Agenzia Fides) - The Secretary of the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples, His Exc. Mgr. Savio Hon Tai Fai, released to Fides Agency the following statement: "For me, this news was out of the blue, left me stunned. My feelings are many, varied, and mingle in a somber mood. On the one hand my heart feels so heavy, but on the other hand I whole heartedly respect the Pope. He is always my beloved Pastor, father and teacher.

Suddenly he decided to renounce the Petrine ministry, and I feel very sad. Yet this is a decision he took after careful evaluation and intense prayer. I cannot do anything but give all my sympathy.

In reality, even our colleagues at the missionary Dicastery feel almost the same sentiments and the same attachment towards Him.

Our Prefect, as Special Envoy of the Pope, is in India for a pastoral visit. I think He, though far away, is encouraging the local Church to pray for the Holy Father. We of the Congregation offered our brief prayer for the Holy Father, in union with our Prefect who is far away, during the Angelus today. And tomorrow morning, during the Mass of the ashes, all our colleagues will gather in prayer remaining firm in affection, in our faith and solidarity as always.

The Holy Father Benedict XVI has dedicated his entire life to the service of the Church. He firmly believes that only "through Christ, with Christ and in Christ," his ministry in the Church can give glory to God and bring salvation to men. Time passes almost without us noticing it, everyone has his moment, even the Pope feels that his strengths, "due to advanced age, I am no longer adequate to exercise properly the Petrine ministry ... This is why, well aware of the seriousness of this act, with full freedom, I renounce the ministry of the Bishop of Rome, Successor of St. Peter "(Final Declaration of Pope Benedict XVI on his resignation from the ministry of the Bishop of Rome, Successor of St Peter, February 11, 2013).

However, he has not really given up his service in the Church, in fact, he wants to dedicate his life to prayer by becoming a good tool in the hands of God. He has done everything for the good of the Church. His resignation may mean an 'Amen' before God. His body due to his age is fragile, but the spirit is strong. The Pope's humility has won my heart again!" (Agenzia Fides 12/02/2013)

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