



VATICAN - Intentions entrusted by the Holy Father Pope Benedict XVI to the Apostleship of Prayer for the year 2008

Vatican City (Fides Service) - We give below the General and Missionary Prayer Intentions entrusted by Pope Benedict XVI to the Apostolate of Prayer for the year 2008.

JANUARY

General:

That the Church may strengthen her commitment to full visible unity in order to manifest ever more clearly her nature as a community of love in which is reflected the communion of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

Mission:

That the Church in Africa, preparing to celebrate the second Special Assembly of the Synod of Bishops for Africa, may continue to be a sign and channel of reconciliation and justice in a continent still suffering from war, exploitation and poverty.

FEBRUARY

General:

That the mentally handicapped may not be marginalised but respected and lovingly helped to live in a way worthy of their physical and social condition.

Mission:

That Institutes of Consecrated Life, so flourishing in mission countries, may rediscover the missionary dimension and, faithful to the radical choice of Gospel counsels, be generous in bearing witness to Christ and proclaiming Him to the ends of the earth.

MARCH

General:

That the importance of forgiveness and reconciliation between individuals and peoples may be understood and that through her testimony the Church may spread Christ's love, the source of new humanity.

Mission:

That Christians persecuted because of the Gospel in various parts of the world and in various manners may be sustained by the strength of the Holy Spirit and continue to bear witness courageously and openly to the Word of God.

APRIL

General:

That even in difficult and complex situations of present-day society, Christians may never tire of proclaiming with their lives Christ's resurrection, the source of hope and peace.

Mission:

That future priests in young Churches may be ever more seriously formed culturally and spiritually in order to evangelise their respective countries and the whole world.

MAY

General:

That Christians may use literature, art and the media to greater advantage to favour a culture which defends and promotes the values of the human person

Mission:

That just as she accompanied the Apostles in the early stages of the Church, may the Blessed Virgin Mary, Star of Evangelisation and Queen of Apostles, continue to guide missionaries throughout the world with maternal affection.

JUNE

General:

That Christians may cultivate a deep and personal friendship with Christ so they are able to communicate the strength of His love to those they encounter

Mission:

That the International Eucharistic Congress in Quebec, Canada, may lead to ever deeper understanding of the Eucharist, the heart of the Church and source of evangelisation.

JULY

General:

That there may be an increase in the number of those who volunteer to serve the Christian community with generous and prompt availability

Mission:

That World Youth Day in Sydney, Australia, may kindle the fire of divine love in numerous young people and render them sowers of hope for a new humanity

AUGUST

General:

That the human family may learn to respect God's plan for the world and become ever more aware that Creation is God's great gift.

Mission:

That the answer of the entire people of God to the common calling to holiness and mission may be promoted and fostered by means of careful discernment of charisma and constant commitment to spiritual and cultural formation

SEPTEMBER

General:

That those who are forced to leave home and country because of war or oppressive regimes may be supported by Christians in the defence and protection of their rights.

Mission:

That faithful to the sacrament of matrimony every Christian family may cultivate the values of love and communion in order to be a small evangelising community, sensitive and open to the material and spiritual needs of others

OCTOBER

General:

That the Synod of Bishops may help bishops and theologians as well as catechists and pastoral workers engaged in the service of the Word of God transmit with courage the truth of the faith in communion with the entire Church.

Mission:

That in this month dedicated to the Missions every Christian community may feel the need to share in the Church's universal mission with prayers, sacrifices and material help.

NOVEMBER

General:

That the testimony of love offered by the Saints, may fortify Christians in their service to God and neighbour, imitating Christ who came not to be served but to serve.

Mission:

That Christian communities in Asia, contemplating the face of Christ, may find the most suitable way to announce Him in full fidelity to the Gospel to the peoples of that vast continent so rich in culture and ancient forms of spirituality.

DECEMBER

General:

That in the face of a spreading of a culture of violence the Church through her apostolic and missionary activity may promote with courage the culture of life.

Mission:

That especially in mission countries Christians may show with acts of fraternal love that the Child born in the stable at Bethlehem is the luminous Hope of the world. (S.L.) (Fides Service 27/1/2007)