

From the Vatican, 14 June 2006

Excellency,

You informed Pope Benedict XVI that, from the 24 - 28 July 2006, the *Third International Conference on Peace Building* organized by the *Catholic Peace Building Network* will be held in Bujumbura in memory of **Archbishop Michael A. Courtney**. His Holiness has charged me to assure all the participants of his sincere encouragement and prayers for the success of this meeting, destined to determine more precisely the specific mission of the Catholic Church in peace-building and reconciliation, most especially in the Great Lakes Region.

The Pope also wishes to pay homage to the courage of Archbishop Courtney and his fidelity to his ministry as bishop and Papal Representative, and showing through the gift of his life the solicitude of the Successor of Peter for all Burundians without exception. The Holy Father trusts that your reflections and guidance may reflect the same courage and faithfulness, and thus may effectively and profoundly contribute to consolidating links of ever deeper dialogue and fraternity between people, communities and religions, while inviting young people to become peace builders. May the synergies created give lasting witness at national, continental and international levels to the will of the Catholic Church to engage herself increasingly in the name of Christ in the promotion of justice, peace and development, by taking an active part in the resolution of tensions between communities, and in fighting all forms of the ethnic discrimination or corruption, and by calling on all the partners concerned at the political and economic level to engage positively in disinterested service of all, and in the search for the common good.

The Holy Father, in entrusting all the participants and organizers of the Conference to the maternal intercession of the Virgin Mary, Queen of Peace, willingly imparts to all a special Apostolic Blessing, entrusting pre-eminently to the Blessed Mother all initiatives aimed at establishing lasting peace throughout the Great Lakes Region.

While I am delighted to have transmitted to you these words of the Holy Father, will Your Excellency accept this expression of my cordial and devoted sentiments.

\*Angelo Cardinal Sodano  
Secretary of State of His Holiness

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His Excellency  
Archbishop Paul R. GALLAGHER  
Apostolic Nuncio in Burundi  
BUJUMBURA