

Vatican City, Monday December 17, 2007

Those who work in the causes of saints need to be at the exclusive service of truth, Benedict XVI says.

The Pope said this today upon receiving in audience postulators from the Vatican Congregation for Saints' Causes.

He began his address by mentioning the forthcoming 25th anniversary of the promulgation of the apostolic constitution "Divinus Perfectionis Magister," with which Pope Paul II revised the procedures of the causes of saints in order to respond to the wishes of experts and pastors who were calling for a more manageable procedure, while still maintaining solidity of research in this field, which is so important for the life of the Church.

"Through beatifications and canonizations," Benedict XVI added, "The Church gives thanks to God for the gift of those of His children who have responded generously to divine grace, honouring them and invoking them as intercessors." And the Church "Presents these shining examples for the imitation of all the faithful, called through baptism to sanctity, which is the aim and goal of every state of life."

At the same time, he said, "Ecclesial communities come to realize the need, even in our own time, of witnesses capable of incarnating the perennial truth of the Gospel in the real circumstances of life, making it an instrument of salvation for the entire world."

The Holy Father added: "Saints, if correctly presented in their spiritual dynamism and historical reality, contribute to making the word of the Gospel and the mission of the Church more believable and attractive. Contact with them opens the way to true spiritual resurrection, lasting conversion and the following of new saints. All those who work in the causes of saints are called to place themselves at the exclusive service of truth. For this reason, during the diocesan inquiry, witness statements and documentary evidence should be gathered both when favourable and when contrary to the sanctity often fame of sanctity or of martyrdom of the Servants of God. Hence, the postulators' role is fundamental, both in the diocesan and apostolic stages of the process; their actions must be above criticism, inspired by rectitude and marked by absolute probity."