



# The Holy See

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**ADDRESS OF JOHN PAUL II  
TO THE STAFF  
OF THE PONTIFICAL VILLAS OF CASTEL GANDOLFO**

*Sunday, 26 September 2004*

*Dear Brothers and Sisters,*

I am pleased to welcome you on this last Sunday of September, when my summer stay at Castel Gandolfo is coming to an end. Indeed, our traditional meeting gives me the opportunity to express to each one of you my deep gratitude for your generous service in this Papal Residence.

I greet in particular Dr Saverio Petrillo, General Director of the Pontifical Villas, and I thank him for his courteous words on behalf of those present. I gladly extend this affectionate greeting to all the employees of the Villas and to their families. May the Lord reward you for the commitment and fidelity with which you carry out the tasks entrusted to you.

On returning to the Vatican, I will take with me a fond memory of the serene and restful days I was able to spend at Castel Gandolfo, thanks to your help. I trust in your prayers, and for my part, I assure you that I will not fail to pray to the Lord that he will always accompany and help you. As I entrust you to the motherly protection of the Virgin Mary, Queen of the Rosary, I bless you affectionately, together with your relatives and all your loved ones.