

Welcome, His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI!

SULTĀN AL-AWLIYĀ' MAULĀNĀ SHEIKH NĀZIM AL-HAQQĀNĪ,
 Letke, Cyprus, 7th *Ḥumādā al-awwal*, 21st of April 2010

[continuation]

Jesus Christ, peace be upon you, where are you sitting?¹

“O Shaykh Nāzim, ask my nation where I am sitting. Who can you ask? You may ask bishops, popes, you may ask patriarchs where am I sitting.”

„O Jesus Christ, I can see a history of outlooking, and your followers are claiming that you dressed in only one piece of cloth and like that you went up to your Lord. Didn't you have such clothes to go up to your Lord in, only one piece of cloth?”

Is that logical? How can that be? And they claim that the Lord accepted him naked and said to him, „Sit at My right hand?” How can that be true? I am asking my Christian brothers. And Pope Benedict is asking to visit this humble place in the Mediterranean Sea. So many stories have reached me that he may come for a visit to one who is addressing people every night. But he has not yet made his final decision to come and visit an old one here. And I am saying that he and I are servants of the Lord. And I am inviting His Holiness throughout the east and the west. The Pope may hear this, and he is welcome. We are welcoming everyone; only Shayḫān is not welcome! No!

picture: fuellhornleben.de



Youssef Soueif, the Maronite Archbishop of Cyprus, stressed that the visit of Pope Benedict “is a grand and important event in the recent history of Cyprus and is a gesture of love and peace”. Announcing the schedule of the apostolic trip of the Pope to Cyprus, he said that the head of the Roman Catholic Church arrives at Paphos Airport. A pilgrimage prayer will follow at Column of Saint Paul, at the Church of Saint Kyriaki. On Saturday, June 5th Pope will meet with President of the Cyprus Republic, Demetris Christofias. He will also meet with the Catholic community of Cyprus (Maronites and Latins) at the Elementary School of Saint Maronas in Anthoupolis. He will visit the Archbishop of Cyprus, Chrysostomos II and in the afternoon he hold Holy Mass at the Holy Cross Latin church where he will meet with the whole of the clergy and laity, who are dedicated to the pastoral service.

On Sunday, the schedule includes Holy Mass at “Eleftheria” Sports Stadium, at the end of which the Pope will present to all prelates of Catholic churches in the Middle East the “Instrumentum Laboris”, the text to prepare the meeting of bishops on the issue of Christians in the Middle East, which will be held in Rome in October. The conclusion of the day and the visit will be with players to the Virgin Mary at the Virgin Mary of Graces Maronite Cathedral at Paphos Gate.

Soueif said that the visit of the Pope to Cyprus “will be a great opportunity to promote humane and Christian principles and values, based on freedom, forgiveness, reconciliation and peace”. During this pastoral trip, the successor of Saint Peter is making a pilgrimage, following the steps of Saint Paul, he added, saying that the Holy Father in a spirit of brotherly dilection is meeting the Orthodox Church, all the churches and all the people of goodwill.

“In a spiritual disposition, ecclesiastical and cultural, though the joy of resurrected Jesus, we are preparing to welcome Pope Benedict XVI in our country, where his presence among us will be a blessing,” he noted.

The representative of Archbishop of Cyprus, Demosthenis Demosthenous said that the Church of Cyprus expresses joy and pleasure for the apostolic trip of Pope Benedict to the island, a historic visit. “It will mark as we believe the history of Cyprus towards the horizons of peace, symbiosis and the final reconciliation”, he added, noting that Christians will give a global example of peace, solidarity and peace. “Cyprus welcomes joyful Pope Benedict XVI”.

Asked if the Pope will meet with the Turkish Cypriot imam of Turkish occupied occupied Letke village, as Turkish Cypriot press reports suggest, Nuncio Franco said that for the time being he is not aware of such an issue, but there is still time. “When there is such a question we will deal with it,” he added. (www.papalvisit.org.cy) ♦



Pope Benedict XVI

But from Mankind everyone may come. I am welcoming them. If I have enough possibility to make a welcome for him, I will do. Although I am a zero person, he has an honour. I am a poor one, an old person, but I am happy if it comes to His Holiness' heart to visit. He is welcome. I will even come out of my house to welcome him and salute him. He must not be in doubt, thinking, "What is his deal with me?" No, we are respectful people, we are respectful people. Salafī 'ul-amā, what you are saying?

Ḥadīth an-Nabīyy:

»*Ibbā atākum karīmā qaṣm fā'kri-mābu.*

Give a warm welcome to heads of tribes."

Give your respect to a person who is honoured and respected in his nation; that is an order. If he is coming, I will give him honour and respect for his position in his nation. We are not putting him down, no; that is not good manners in Islam. Whoever comes

must be given our respect. I was thinking to try and write a letter to invite His Holiness, but holy ones are telling me there is no need; you may give your invitation from east to west. I am very happy to invite him and to honour him. He is welcome. This broadcast may reach His Holiness, he must not be afraid of anyone, and he may come. Even if the Christian leaders on this island, are not inviting him. But I am a zero person; if he is giving an honour to me by coming, Allāh *subḥānahu wa ta'ālā* will grant to him what He wants to grant.

The whole Christian world, the whole Catholic world may hear and understand that we are following the steps of the prophets. Welcome! If he doesn't come he is responsible. Yes, I also have a tray like Jesus Christ, who was granted a tray with twelve kinds of foods on it. I may find olives, bread, fish, not chicken, but twelve kinds of Allāh Almighty's *lutf*, grants, to offer to His Holiness. Welcome to you!

And also, our Salafī 'ulamā, if they are asking to come, welcome. If *jalālatu mālik*, the king of Arabia, is not so proud, he may come here and I may do my best for him also. For the Dalai Lama there is no need; every day he is eating such things. If the American President Obama is asking to come, I may make *isitqāḥ*, welcoming him. If he wants to come. If he should be so *mutawāḍi'ā*, humble, he may come! I am happy to welcome him, and I will serve him twelve or more kinds of

Experted Ḥāratete



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fruits and foods. If his Excellency, President Obama, or Her Majesty the Queen, is asking to come, welcome! We (in Cyprus) were once upon a time her grandfather's citizens. If Her Majesty wants to come, welcome!

Sometimes I am an easy person, and sometimes I am very difficult, because my heart hangs to heavens; I am not speaking on behalf of my ego, no. Welcome, welcome to Her Majesty also.

Fātibah.

Only our Turkish government people never like to come! If they come, I will welcome them also, particularly generals. If

they come, I am taking all generals out and stopping all judgments, finished. And Her Majesty teaches us to say "Hip Hip! Hooray!! Hip Hip! Hooray!! Hip Hip! Hooray!!" Sound the cannons, seven *talqat*! Yes!

Fātibah.

Too much? Because they are giving for my birthday. For Her Majesty's birthday they are drinking whiskey, and for my birthday I am drinking water!

Fātibah.

... *Allāhu akbar, Allāhu akbar. Māḥā' Al-lāh, Māḥā' Allāh, Allāhu akbar, Allāhu akbar. Subḥāna llāh.* ♦

POPE BENEDICT XVI IS EXPECTED TO VISIT CYPRUS FROM THE 4TH TO THE 6TH OF JUNE.

Pope's visit to Cyprus historic, say Catholics and Orthodox

Nicosia, Apr 12 (GNA) – The visit of Holy Father Pope Benedict XVI to Cyprus is a pastoral visit with many dimensions, the Apostolic Nuncio in Cyprus, Antonio Franco stressed in a press conference on Monday, in which the Catholic Church in Cyprus (Maronites and Latins) publicised the schedule of the Pope's visit to the island.

The visit was officially announced last Saturday in Rome and Nicosia.

Nuncio Franco said that the three days visit of Pope Benedict starts on June 4th in Paphos, on the western coast, where he will have a moment of pilgrimage on the footsteps of Saint Paul. On Saturday the Pope will meet with Archbishop of Cyprus, Chrysostomos II and on Sunday the Pope will present to all prelates of Catholic churches in the Middle East the "Instrumentum Laboris" the document for the Synod of Middle East, in next October, he added.

Nuncio underlined that "it is the first time that a Pope visits the island but the Christian presence in the island is Apostolic, comes from the preaching and the presence of Paul and Barnaba on the island is the characteristic history of the island. It is really for me and for all of us to receive the Holy Father in this pastoral visit here in Cyprus".

"We must prepare for this visit so it may bring fruits of a spiritual renewal in our communities because the Pope comes as the head of the Catholic churches but also as the spiritual leader to bring and stress the spiritual values to orient our lives, the lives of every Christian, every believer," he said.

