

POPE'S LETTER TO CARDINAL GIANFRANCO RAVASI

Vatican City, 23 February 2013 (VIS) – Benedict XVI, in an apostolic letter, thanked Cardinal Gianfranco Ravasi, president of the Pontifical Council for Culture, for his preaching during the Lenten retreat directed by Ravasi at the Pope's own request. The theme chosen for the retreat by the Cardinal was "Ars orandi, ars credendi" (the art of praying is the art of believing). [See explanatory note below from A. Rodriguez]

“You have offered us,” the Holy Father writes, “a fascinating journey through the Psalms, following a double path: ascending and descending. The Psalms, in fact, are fundamentally oriented toward the face of God, toward the mystery in which the human mind gets lost, but the very Word of God allows us to see according to the different profiles in which God reveals himself. At the same time, in the light that shine from the face of God, praying the Psalms allows us to see the face of humanity, to recognize the truth of human joy and sorrow, human anguish and hope.”

“In this way, ... the Word of God, mediated by the ancient and ever-new 'ars orandi' of the Jewish people and the Church, has allowed us to renew the 'ars credendi': a need that is highlighted by the Year of Faith and is even more necessary in this particular moment that I, personally, and the Apostolic See are living. Peter's successor and his collaborators are called to give the Church and the world a clear testimony of faith, and this is only possible thanks to a deep and abiding immersion in dialogue with God.

"Many today are asking: Who will show us what is good? We can answer, **those who reflect God's light and face with their lives.**"

NOTE: ***Lex orandi, lex credendi*** (Latin loosely translatable as "the law of prayer is the law of belief") refers to the relationship between worship and belief, and is an ancient Christian principle which provided a measure for developing the ancient Christian creeds, the canon of scripture and other doctrinal matters based on the prayer texts of the Church, that is, the Church's liturgy. In the Early Church there was liturgical tradition before there was a common creed and before there was an officially sanctioned biblical canon. These liturgical traditions provided the theological framework for establishing the creeds and canon. The oldest prayers known in the judeocristian tradition are the Psalms.