

St Gallen, 13 March 2023
Prot. N. B3/2578

Most Blessed Father,

on the tenth anniversary of your election as Bishop of Rome, we express the affection and closeness of all the bishops of Europe to you and our gratitude for the gift of your ministry as Successor of the Apostle Peter in the service of the Church and mankind.

Our best wishes become gratitude for the teachings, the testimony of evangelical life and the spiritual paternity with which you guide us, and for your broad and widespread "European Magisterium". How can we fail to recall your visit to the European Parliament and the Council of Europe in Strasbourg in 2014, but also your many trips to the heart of our Continent; the awarding of the Charlemagne Prize in 2016, but also the meeting with the Heads of State and Government of the European Union on the 60th anniversary of the Treaty of Rome, on 24 March 2017.

At that very meeting, Holy Father, you stressed that "The founding fathers remind us that Europe is not a conglomeration of rules to obey, or a manual of protocols and procedures to follow. It is a way of life, a way of understanding man based on his transcendent and inalienable dignity, as something more than simply a sum of rights to defend or claims to advance".


A Sua Santità
Papa Francesco
Casa Santa Marta
00120 Città del Vaticano


We thank you for your encouragement not to fall into discouragement and resignation insofar as “We are called by the Lord to a work of wonder, to work so that his home is ever more welcoming, so that everyone may enter and live here” (*Homily on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the CCEE*), and because you continue to accompany us in the delicate mission of proclaiming Christ and “help Europe to rediscover the ever-youthful face of Jesus and his bride”, rediscovering the Christian values that are at the basis of its European identity.

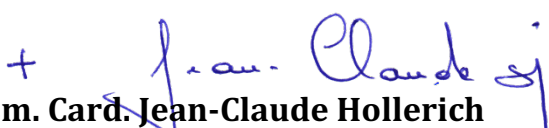
Thank you, Holy Father, because in this past year, since the invasion of Ukraine, you have never tired of calling for an end to the war and praying for the victims of this conflict. Together with our church communities, we want to join our voice to your and renew our appeal to those in authority over nations to bring about a just peace for the Ukrainian people as soon as possible.

As we reaffirm our communion with you, Holy Father, we assure you of our prayers and ask for your paternal blessing. May the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of Europe, and the Patron Saints of our Continent assist you in your Petrine Ministry.

The CCEE Presidency


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