



To our venerable Brother  
Marc OUELLET P.S.S.  
Cardinal of the Holy Roman Catholic Church  
Metropolitan Archbishop of Quebec

It was four hundred years ago that the Grand Chief Membertou of the Mi'kmaq Nation received Holy Baptism, and that the blessings of salvation offered by the Lord were thus bestowed upon this Nation by the missionaries sent to proclaim the Gospel.

It is most appropriate that this event be commemorated with solemnity and emphasized with the greatest dignity, since its celebration will create a unique opportunity to deepen mutual understanding and brotherly love between the First Nations and the other Canadians, in order that, strengthened in their faith and sustained by new commitments, they may be able to progress rapidly on the path of salvation.

With the help of God's grace, this commemoration of the fourth centenary of the solemn Baptism of Membertou will be held on August 1<sup>st</sup> at Chapel Island, in the presence of the inhabitants of this locality and those coming from the neighbouring villages, so that this local Church, receiving the vitality of its faith from this same community, may yield fruit more abundantly and experience day after day a renewed Christian life.

In response to the request of the Chiefs of the Mi'kmaq Nation Kji Saqmaq Sante' Mawiomi Ben Sylliboy and Kji Keptin Sante' Mawiomi Andrew S. Denny, and of Rodney McDonald, Premier of the province of Nova Scotia, and in our desire that this commemoration be celebrated with greater solemnity and an uncommon splendour, We have decided to delegate to this effect a distinguished Bishop to assume this responsibility and represent Us. This is how Our eyes turned on you, venerable Brother, renowned son of the Canadian nation, knowing that you are qualified to carry out this mission and fulfil it with great care. Consequently, with sincere affection, We appoint you, venerable Brother, as **Our Extraordinary Messenger** for the celebration of the aforesaid anniversary.

To all the faithful and all those who will take part in this commemoration, you will bear witness to our paternal affection, so that, according to the well-proven customs of the Elders, they continue to walk the paths of faith and piety with the most sincere conviction. Finally, we also want you to give, in Our name, to all persons present Our apostolic Blessing, proof of the spiritual renewal of souls and sign of heavenly favours.

Given at the Vatican, on June 30, 2010, the sixth year of our Pontificate.

Benedictus XVI, PP.