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A Message from Most Reverend John C. Wester on the Passing of Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI

ALBUQUERQUE – Saturday, December 31, 2022– IMMEDIATE RELEASE – Most Reverend John C. Wester, Archbishop of Santa Fe, has released the following message on the passing of Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI:

My Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

As we mourn the passing of Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI, I ask that we all pause and offer prayers for the happy repose of his gentle soul. He was a remarkable servant of God whose service to the Catholic Church and the world was marked by selflessness and fidelity to the Gospel. As a theologian, author, Prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, and pope, he distinguished himself by his humility and his love for Jesus Christ. Our prayers for him at this sacred time when he approaches the throne of Almighty God are gifts he truly deserves.

Our pastors, deacons, consecrated religious, principals and lay leaders will be planning services and remembrances in the days and weeks ahead. For the moment, please note the following events will take place at the Cathedral Basilica of St. Francis of Assisi in Santa Fe today, December 31, 2022:

- at noon today, the faithful will gather to offer prayers for the happy repose of Pope Emeritus Benedict's soul;
- at 3:30 p.m. today, there will be a public recitation of the rosary for the happy repose of the soul of Pope Emeritus Benedict; and
- at 4 p.m. today, the usual Saturday evening Mass will be celebrated (today is the eve of the Solemnity of Mary, the Mother of God). This Mass will be live-streamed for the benefit of the faithful throughout the archdiocese.

The pope, who sits on the Chair of Peter, is a sign of unity and charity in the Catholic Church. And so, in death as in life, our popes unite us in faith even as we mourn their passing.

Let us remember to pray for Pope Emeritus Benedict, especially in the days and weeks ahead, and may our prayers accompany him on his final pilgrim journey to Christ, whose vicar he was.

Eternal rest grant unto Benedict, O Lord, and may perpetual light shine upon him. May he rest in peace. May his soul and all the souls of all the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen.

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