

Beat: News

## Pope Francis to Benedictines:

### Monasteries are oases of God's mercy

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**USPA NEWS** - (Vatican Radio) Pope Francis says today's society "is increasingly showing its need of mercy" and described Benedictine monasteries "as oases of spirituality" where people can obtain that mercy.

where people can obtain that mercy. The Pope's comments came on Thursday during an address to participants of the International Congress of Benedictine Abbots and Abbesses taking place in Rome.

Pope Francis said when we talk of our world needing more mercy, this is not "a slogan or a recipe" but instead something that comes from the very heart of Christian life making that person "more attentive to the needy and showing solidarity with them." This, he declared, is the concrete quality of the love that shows "the authenticity and credibility" of the Church's message.

In a Church that is called to concentrate increasingly on the essentials, the Pope said monks and nuns have a vocation of nurturing their special gift and responsibility: namely "to keep alive the oases of the spirit, where clergy and the lay faithful can dip into the springs of divine mercy."

He praised the Benedictines for living as "people of mercy" in their communities and for "their silent yet eloquent" work, saying it allows God to speak amidst the "deafening and distracted lifestyle" of today's world.

Pope Francis urged the abbots and abbesses not to become discouraged if the members of their monastic communities diminish in number and they become older and stressed it was necessary to have the courage to establish new communities even in the most difficult countries.

"Your service to the Church is very precious," he assured them.

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