



## THE FIRST WORLD CONGRESS OF BENEDICTINE OBLATES

ROME 19 – 25 SEPTEMBER 2005

*Welcome address from the Italian Coordinator, Professor Angelamaria Fiorillo  
from the monastery of St. Anthony the Abbot in Salerno*

*Good evening all,*

*It doesn't seem real, but our work is coming to an end. The first annual World Congress of Benedictine Oblates bore its fruits: friendship, exchange of opinions, welcoming of differences, and prayer characterized these days in Rome.*

*We have in fact succeeded in attaching names to the "delegations and representatives"; "representative" was translated into Angela, Jon, Thina, Michael, Giovanna, Luigi...*

*As is the case with all first attempts, we realized that there are some things we could have done better, but this will have to wait for the next congress.*

*It is now my pleasant duty to once again thank all persons who have given their heart and soul to the task, with humility and the spirit of sacrifice, lending their services to the benefit of those who came from afar to live this experience. It is only thanks to this spirit of service that the congress could be held.*

*During the team exchanges, both oblates and their national coordinators recognized the pre-eminent role of the liturgy and prayer that unified us throughout the congress, and which allowed us to overcome the difficulties flowing from the diversity of languages and cultures.*

*The traditions, the singing, the Gregorian chant, the Benedictine spirit, all contributed to the realization of what Saint Benedict called "the world in a ray of sunshine".*

*I sincerely wish to maintain contact with the national coordinators. It is important to maintain exchanges between them in order to address the most fundamental questions concerning the importance and nature of the Oblate, his or her relationship with the monastery, and his or her mission in the world. The human and cultural patrimony that we have built throughout the congress most certainly must not be lost; we must cement our witness and mission in the world.*



*I ask that you transmit to your groups, to your monasteries and to your families, the most cordial salutations of the Italian Oblates. To you I say “au revoir”.*

*Looking forward to the next time we get together, I extend my warm embrace.*