



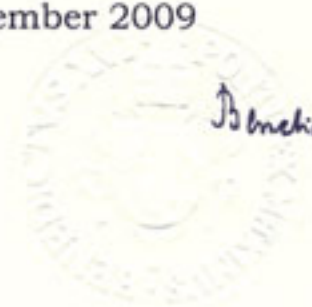
*To the Most Reverend J. Michael Miller  
Archbishop of Vancouver*

I was pleased to learn that the XXI Winter Olympic Games and the X Paralympic Winter Games are to be held in the Archdiocese of Vancouver and the Diocese of Kamloops, from 12 to 28 February 2010. As I send my cordial greetings to you and Bishop David Monroe, my good wishes also go to the participating athletes, the organizers and the many community volunteers who are generously cooperating in the celebration of this significant international event.

Such an important occurrence for both athletes and spectators allows me to recall how sport "can make an effective contribution to peaceful understanding between peoples and to establishing the new civilization of love" (JOHN PAUL II, *Homily*, 29 October 2000, 2). In this light, may sport always be a valued building block of peace and friendship between peoples and nations. I also note the ecumenical initiative *More Than Gold*, intended to provide spiritual and material assistance to visitors, participants and volunteers alike. I pray that all who avail themselves of this service will be confirmed in their love of God and neighbour.

With these sentiments in mind, upon all associated with the celebration of the XXI Winter Olympic Games and the X Paralympic Winter Games, I cordially invoke the abundant blessings of Almighty God.

From the Vatican, 30 December 2009



*Benedictus II*