

**GREETINGS OF THE ARCHBISHOP PRIMATE  
ON THE OCCASION OF THE EVENT  
GUIMARÃES 2012. EUROPEAN CAPITAL OF CULTURE**

Dear Friends,

This year, the city of Guimarães finds itself transformed into an intellectual and artistic stage where different cultural streams meet in joy.

In a long-awaited year of lavish events, ranging from musical shows and theatre to poetry and literature, I would like to meet each of you, learn from you and create something perpetually valid and lasting. Pope Paul VI said "what we hold important is man, each man, and each group of men, and we even include the whole of humanity." Pope Benedict XVI in his Encyclical 'Caritas in Veritate', reinforces this idea and adds: "The primary capital to be safeguarded and valued is man, the human person in his or her integrity." And he said: "That authentic human development concerns the whole of the person in every single dimension (...), if it does not involve the whole man and every man, it is not true development." Now, Guimarães 2012 has all the conditions necessary to enhance the person, to develop their potential and talents, enrich their cultural experience and proclaim how beautiful and good life is.

The Church is no stranger to the world of culture. On the contrary, looking back, we find the monasteries resisting the treasures of the old culture and gradually moving towards a new culture. Already in our own age, we find Pope Benedict XVI meeting the cultivators of Thought, Science and Art with those who share the desire to make way and the great mission is to find it and follow it: "There's a whole learning to make about the way the Church is in the world, leading the society to realize that by proclaiming the truth, is a service that the Church provides to society by opening new horizons of future, of greatness and dignity."

I truly desire, dear friends, that during this year, Guimarães prepares and follows a path that will be remembered in years to come as the City of Truth. We know that this journey is difficult, since there are many who, in modern times, view culture as a means to ensure economic benefits, but that path is utilitarian, twisted and poor. I hope that in Guimarães 2012, dance, music, literature and architecture harmonize in enriching humanity and allow you to enjoy your own life to the full, in the knowledge that the spirit dwells far beyond the senses.

The Church of Braga will propose, in a spirit of partnership, a set of initiatives. The spirit moves us to collaborate in hosting this important event for our region without intending to preach. Through discussion and implementation of initiatives we can create a more humane future for mankind.

We look forward to welcoming you to Guimarães, European Capital of Culture 2012.

Braga, 12-01-21

+ Jorge Ferreira da Costa Ortiga,

Archbishop Primate of Braga.