

## **Holiness Is Fulfillment, Says Pontiff**

Comments on Gregory of Nyssa's Teachings

VATICAN CITY, AUG. 29, 2007 ([Zenit.org](http://www.zenit.org)).- The human person is made to reign over all creation, says Benedict XVI, but he must allow God to be present within him if he is to reach his true greatness.

The Pope said this during today's reflection at the general audience in St. Peter's Square, which he dedicated to St. Gregory of Nyssa, continuing with his series of teaching on fourth-century doctors of the Church.

The Holy Father called St. Gregory a "pillar of orthodoxy," and showed how the bishop "participated in the triumph of orthodoxy" through his participation in councils and his many writings.

"Gregory expresses with clarity the scope of his studies, the supreme goal for which he aims in his theological work: to not engage one's life in vane pursuits, but to find the light that enables one to discern that which is truly useful," the Pontiff said. "He found this supreme good in Christianity, thanks to which 'imitation of the divine nature' is possible."

Benedict XVI highlighted St. Gregory's teaching on the creation of the human person.

"Gregory highlights the fact that God, 'the best artist, forges our nature so as to make it suitable for the exercise of royalty. Through the superiority given by the soul, and through the very make-up of the body, he arranges things in such a way that man is truly fit for regal power,'" the Pope said.

He added: "But we see how man, in the web of sins, often abusive of creation, does not act in a regal fashion. For this reason, in fact, in order to obtain true responsibility toward creatures, he must be penetrated by God and live in his light.

"Man is a reflection of that original beauty which is God. [...] Man was also listed among those very good things, adorned with a beauty far superior to all of the good things. In fact, what else could be good, on par with one who was similar to pure and incorruptible beauty?"

"Man was honored by God and placed above every other creature. [...] 'Only you -- human soul -- were made to be the image of nature that surpasses every intellect, likeness of incorruptible beauty, mark of true divinity, vessel of blessed life, image of the true light, that when you look upon it you become that which he is, because through the reflected ray coming from your purity you imitate he who shines within you. Nothing that exists can measure up to your greatness.'"

The Holy Father encouraged meditation on this praise of man.

"Let us try to return to that original greatness," he urged. "Only if God is present will man arrive at this, his true greatness. Purifying his heart, he returns to being, as he was in the beginning, a clear image of God, beauty itself.

"Man has as his end the contemplation of God. Only in him can he find his fulfillment. [...] In other words -- and this is the most important lesson that St. Gregory of Nyssa gives us -- man's total fulfillment consists in holiness, in a life lived with God, that, in this way, becomes luminous for others and for the world."