



press release

Contact: Diane Steinert
steinert@wneo.pbs.org
330-677-4549

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Documentary Takes an Intimate Look at Life at the Vatican

KENT, Ohio — Nov. 1, 2005 — In **Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger: My Vatican**, the man now known as Pope Benedict XVI provides a first-hand glimpse of life at the Vatican. The intimate documentary, which airs on PBS 45 & 49 on Sunday, Nov. 20 at 8 p.m., was filmed prior to the cardinal's ascendancy to pope.

The former Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger guides viewers to locations that are inaccessible to the public, many of which have never before been filmed. They include catacombs, museums and the archives of the Inquisition. Along the way, the cardinal offers commentary that provides a fascinating insight into his life at the Vatican.

If the Vatican were a corporation, it would be the oldest business in the world. It is the world's wealthiest organization and is at the center of countless conspiracy theories. But Ratzinger gently rebuffs all the rumors. "It's not true that we spend all our time rummaging around secret archives," he laughs. "The Vatican administration is not substantially different to, or substantially more mysterious than, any other large political administration," he says.

What other 0.2-square-mile patch of land has its own private army, postal system, currency, telephone exchange and train system? It is the only country in the world whose gates are opened and locked each day. Official residents travel on a papal passport that is written, naturally, in Latin.

Although around 4,000 people work for the Vatican, only 500 are official residents. The others are foreign employees who work six days a week for below the minimum wage.

Labor unions and contractual negotiations are unheard of and many workers are forced to take a second job in Rome. But if the salary is low, there are other advantages of working for the Vatican. Who else has the pope as their boss? And, as Cardinal Ratzinger explains, "There are generally no taxes."

The magnificence of the Vatican palace is a world away from the simple room Ratzinger lived in when he was first summoned to Rome. "I had only a room and a few books and lived out of a suitcase," he states. "But in those early days, even with the simplicity, I was filled with excitement. I think back fondly."

To most people, the Vatican is a shadowy world of closed doors and dark secrets. This intimate tour, from the man who is now pope, opens the door into that world.

About PBS 45 & 49

PBS 45 & 49 is owned and operated by Northeastern Educational Television of Ohio, Inc., a private, nonprofit corporation. A trusted community resource, PBS 45 & 49 uses the power of non-commercial television and related services to enrich the lives of people through high-quality programming and educational services that teach, illuminate and inspire.

PBS
45 & 49

Northeastern
Educational Television of
Ohio, Inc.

**1750 Campus
Center Drive**

P. O. Box 5191

Kent, Ohio

44240-5191

Phone
330.677.4549

Fax
330.678.0688

E-mail
questions@wneo.pbs.org

Web Site
www.pbs4549.org