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**PRESS RELEASE  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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Ottawa, February 25, 2013

**ARCHBISHOP PRENDERGAST TO PRESIDE AT A MASS OF THANKSGIVING  
FOR THE MINISTRY OF POPE BENEDICT XVI**

*Join us in expressing our gratitude to God for Joseph Ratzinger's long service to the Church, particularly his eight years as Pope Benedict XVI. Archbishop Terrence Prendergast will offer a bilingual Mass of Thanksgiving on Wednesday, February 27 at 5:15 pm at Notre Dame Cathedral Basilica – 385 Sussex Drive, Ottawa.*

“The startling event of the Holy Father’s retirement from the Petrine ministry has focused our attention at the beginning of Lent in an unanticipated way,” said Archbishop Prendergast. “Let us pray for him as he prepares for this transition in his life as a disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ and pray also for the one who will succeed him as pope.”

Effective at 2 pm Ottawa time on February 28, we will omit the name of the Pope in the Eucharistic Prayer as the See of Peter will be vacant (sede vacante) from then until the election of Pope Benedict’s successor. We should now add to the prayers of the faithful a petition for the Holy Spirit’s guidance of the College of Cardinals as they prepare to elect the next Bishop of Rome and Universal Pastor.

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