

# Text of Pope Benedict's remarks at New York synagogue

NEW YORK – Here is the text of Pope Benedict XVI's remarks during his visit to Park East Synagogue in New York April 18.

*Dear friends,*

Shalom! It is with joy that I come here, just a few hours before the celebration of your Pesach, to express my respect and esteem for the Jewish community in New York City. The proximity of this place of worship to my residence gives me the opportunity to greet some of you today.

I find it moving to recall that Jesus as a young boy heard the words of Scripture and prayed in a place such as this. I thank Rabbi Schneier for his words of welcome, and I particularly appreciate your kind gift, the spring flowers and the lovely song that the children sang for me.

I know that the Jewish community makes a valuable contribution to the life of the city, and I encourage all of you to continue building bridges of friendship with all the many different ethnic and religious groups present in your neighborhood.

I assure you most especially of my closeness at this time as you prepare to celebrate the great deeds of the Almighty and to sing the praises of him who has worked such wonders for his people. I would ask those of you who are present to pass on my greetings and good wishes to all the members of the Jewish community. Blessed be the name of the Lord!