



## The Holy See

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**ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS BENEDICT XVI  
TO THE REGENSBURGER DOMSPATZEN  
(REGENSBURG CATHEDRAL BOYS' CHOIR OF GERMANY)**

*Sistine Chapel*

*Saturday, 22 October 2005*

*Dear Friends,*

At the end of this beautiful musical performance, I am sure to interpret the thought of all here present by expressing my heartfelt thanks to *Regensburger Domspatzen*, masterfully conducted by the Director *Roland BÜchner* and accompanied by the Organist *Franz Josef Stoiber*.

We were able to enjoy some marvellous pieces of music, while our eyes scanned the masterpieces of Michelangelo and other famous painters whose artistic creations are conserved here.

While listening, my mind went spontaneously to Psalm 84[83]: "*How lovely is your dwelling place, Lord, God of hosts!... The sparrow herself finds a home*" - the German word for "sparrows" is *Spatzen* - "*and the swallow a nest for her brood; she lays her young by your altars, Lord of hosts, my king and my God. They are happy, who dwell in your house, for ever singing your praise*" (vv. 2, 4-5).

Happy are the choristers of this famous choir, who were able to sing God's praises surrounded by the marvellous scenes of the Sistine Chapel. And happy are we who, listening to their song, were in tune with their praise.

In the name of all I wish to express my congratulations once again to the choirmaster and organist and to the entire *Domspatzen* choir for this beautiful concert, a gift to us in the evocative atmosphere of the Sistine Chapel.

In this evening's encounter, especially with masters of the 1800s - with great names, but also with composers little known outside of the ecclesiastical circle -, you have given us great joy with the programme's variety.

All of the music you performed belongs to a style of music that, born from the inspiration of faith, leads anew to faith and to prayer. It is music that awakens God's joy within us. Listening, I felt I was taken back to my years at Ratisbon. It was a wonderful time when, through my brother, I too was a part of the *Domspatzen* family. At the end of 30 years of work with your choir, he said: "The good God could not have given me a more beautiful job".

This was not only a personal thanks for a wonderful calling; it was at the same time a good wish: that the members of *Domspatzen* continue to be messengers of the beautiful, messengers of faith, messengers of God in this world, and that they always find, according to their primary calling, the centre of their activity in liturgical service for the glory of God.

The psalmist of Psalm 84[83] sees himself as a sparrow that has found by God's altars his favourite dwelling place, the place where he can live and be "happy". The image of the sparrow is a joyful one, through which the psalmist wants to say that his entire life has become a song. He can sing and fly.

Singing itself is almost like flying, rising up to God; it is in some way an anticipation of eternity when we will be able to "unceasingly sing God's praise".

It is in this perspective that I address my most cordial best wishes to all here present, invoking God's Blessing upon each one.

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