



The Holy See

CONCERT OFFERED BY THE PRO MUSICA E ARTE SACRA FOUNDATION
ON THE OCCASION OF THE SYNOD OF BISHOPS

ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS BENEDICT XVI

Basilica of St Paul Outside-the-Walls

Monday, 13 October 2008

Your Eminences,

*Venerable Brothers in the Episcopate
and in the Priesthood,*

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

The concert this evening is one of the various initiatives planned for the special Jubilee of the Pauline Year. It is taking place in the evocative setting of the Basilica of St Paul Outside-the-Walls where several days ago the Ordinary Assembly of the Synod of Bishops was solemnly inaugurated. I naturally extend my greeting and cordial thanks to all those who have promoted and organized this beautiful evening with a high quality musical performance. In the first place, I wish to thank the *Pro Musica e Arte Sacra Foundation*, well known for its numerous initiatives. I then greet and thank the members of the *Wiener Philharmoniker* Orchestra, which has offered us a masterful performance of Anton Bruckner's Sixth Symphony, steeped in a religious sense and profound mysticism.

With joy and full of gratitude I greet the *Wiener Philharmoniker*, conducted today by Christoph Eschenbach, which for the seventh time in the context of the International Festival of Sacred Music and Art has imbued its audience with deep joy. Dear friends, with your professionalism and your musical ability you always succeed in moving the hearts of your listeners and in offering them Bruckner's marvellous music, you have plucked all the heartstrings of human feeling. With your musical talent you raise society from the human to the divine sphere. For this, I say to you all a heartfelt "Vergelt's Gott!".

The Sixth Symphony expresses the faith of its composer who, with his compositions was able to transmit a religious vision of life and of history. We might say that Anton Bruckner, drawing from the Austrian Baroque and from the Schubertian tradition of popular song, took to its extreme conclusion the romantic process of interiorization. In listening to this famous composition in the Basilica dedicated to St Paul one spontaneously thinks of a passage from the First Letter to the Corinthians in which the Apostle, after speaking of the diversity and unity of spiritual gifts compares the Church to the human body, made up of very different members but all indispensable for its good functioning (cf. 1 Cor 12). The orchestra and the choir are also comprised of different instruments and voices, which in tune with one another offer a harmonious melody, pleasing to the ear and the spirit. Dear brothers and sisters, let us take note of this teaching which we see confirmed in the splendid musical performance we had the pleasure of hearing. I greet you all with affection, as I address a special thought to the Synod Fathers and to the other important people present. Lastly, I extend a fraternal greeting to Cardinal Cordero Lanza di Montezemolo, Archpriest of this Papal Basilica, who has once again offered us such a cordial welcome. I would like to thank him, together with his collaborators, for the various religious and cultural events planned for the Pauline Year underway. May this Roman Basilica where the mortal remains of the Apostle to the Gentiles are preserved truly be a fulcrum of liturgical, spiritual and cultural initiatives which aim at rediscovering his missionary work and his theological thought. As I invoke the intercession of this eminent Saint and the motherly protection of Mary Queen of Apostles I warmly impart the Apostolic Blessing to everyone present and gladly extend it to their loved ones.

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