



The Holy See

**ADDRESS OF JOHN PAUL II
TO THE RUSSIAN CHORUS "JUBILEUM"
IN THE "REDEMPTORIS MATER" CHAPEL**

*Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God
Tuesday, 1 January 2002*

Together with a well-deserved applause, I warmly greet you all, choir master and members of the "*Jubileum*" choir of Moscow. I am very grateful for the gift of choral song that you have generously offered to me during this Christmas season at the beginning of the New Year.

Your wonderful music, dear young people, harmonized eloquently with the figures and colours of this *Redemptoris Mater* Chapel, decorated in an ecumenical spirit following the Eastern tradition. I greatly appreciate Russian liturgical music and I feel very close to your culture, especially in its religious aspects. Russian culture, art, literature, and music are all realities filled with a strong spirituality which elevates the mind and heart to God and fills us with goodness and compassion towards our neighbour.

I thank the Director of the Choir, Maestro Alexander Nevzorov, who trains you to bring out the full beauty of your choral singing.

I was delighted to learn that you have come from Moscow with the blessing of the Patriarch Alexei II. I take this occasion to send him my brotherly greetings through you, and wish him every grace of this season of the Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ.

It is with great pleasure that I welcome you, dear friends, and I hope that you will always consider this place to be your home. I warmly embrace you, thanking you once again, and wishing every blessing upon your artistic activity. To you and to your loved ones I wholeheartedly impart the Apostolic Blessing.

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