



The Holy See

***ADDRESS OF THE HOLY FATHER JOHN PAUL II
AT THE END OF THE CONCERT OFFERED TO HIM
BY THE CZECH REPUBLIC***

Sunday, 22 October 2000

Ladies and Gentlemen!

I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude for this splendid concert which the Czech Republic has offered me during the Great Jubilee. With the help of art, it has allowed us to contemplate the mystery of Christ, the basis of our hope.

My respectful greetings go first of all to the Prime Minister and the other Czech authorities, whose participation is a significant confirmation of their desire to restore a climate of active collaboration between the State and the Church in their country. On this occasion I would like to send a respectful greeting to the President of the Czech Republic, Václav Havel.

I also affectionately greet the Cardinals and my Brothers in the Episcopate who wished to attend this artistic and cultural event, thus increasing its solemnity by their presence. My greeting goes lastly to everyone present, who has shared the joy of this stupendous performance. In the name of all, I express my grateful appreciation to *Maestro Aldo Ceccato, who interpreted and presented the magnificent score of Franz Liszt's Oratorio Christus* with intense and profound feeling.

I also express these sentiments to the soloists, the musicians of the *Brno Philharmonic Orchestra* and the members of the *Czech Philharmonic Chorus of Brno*. And I would like to thank the organizers, whose generous commitment made this performance possible.

The remarkable spiritual experience we have had this evening prompts me to express the hope that the dignity of art and the heritage handed down to us by previous generations can lead the men and women of the new millennium to a renewed contemplation of evangelical Truth, the only guarantee for building a new civilization fully based on respect for every person and every culture.

I entrust these wishes to Christ Jesus and to the Virgin Mary, his Mother and our Mother, as I invoke upon all the blessing

of heaven.

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