



The Holy See

**ADDRESS OF THE HOLY FATHER JOHN PAUL II
TO THE PERFORMERS IN THE EIGHT ANNUAL CONCERT
"CHRISTMAS IN THE VATICAN"**

Friday, 15 December 2000

Ladies and Gentlemen!

1. Welcome and thank you for your visit. I cordially greet each of you, promoters, organizers, performers and all who in various ways have helped to produce this concert, now being held for the eighth time, with the evocative title "Christmas in the Vatican".

I am particularly pleased to welcome you and to express my appreciation of your contribution to the success of this noble and praiseworthy programme, which this year too includes many professional expressions of art and music from various countries.

2. An additional reason to thank you is that your contribution is meant to help the Vicariate of Rome to complete the project "*50 Churches for Rome 2000*". It is a significant effort to provide the parish communities that still lack them with facilities for worship and catechesis, as well as for the various social, charitable and athletic activities which are so necessary.

Here I would like to recall that in the past 20 years, with the assistance of many citizens and of private and public bodies, our Diocese has been able to build 39 parish complexes, while 10 are currently being built and 12 are in the planning phase. I express my deep satisfaction with these significant pastoral and financial efforts. These new parish complexes, spiritual meeting points in a growing and rapidly expanding city, will be a lasting sign of the Church's concern for the new evangelization. All this acquires even greater value in the context of the Great Jubilee, now drawing to a close.

3. I would like to take this occasion to express to each of you my fervent good wishes for the Christmas holidays now at hand. My affectionate greetings also go to all who will be enjoying your

performance on television. May the Child Jesus, Son of the Virgin Mary, whom in the mystery of Christmas we contemplate in the poverty of Bethlehem, bring joy, serenity and peace to every home, to every family, to every city and to all the world. I confirm this wish with a special Apostolic Blessing, which I gladly extend to your loved ones and to all who are taking part in this great musical event through television.

Happy Christmas!

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