



The Holy See

***GREETING OF HIS HOLINESS BENEDICT XVI
TO THE PATRONS OF THE ARTS
IN THE VATICAN MUSEUMS***

Clementine Hall

Thursday, 1 June 2006

Your Eminences,

Your Excellencies,

Dear Friends, I am pleased to greet the Patrons of the Arts in the Vatican Museums on the occasion of your pilgrimage to Rome for the five-hundredth anniversary of the founding of the Vatican Museums. At the same time, I thank you for your continuing interest, which is motivated not only by a sense of stewardship for the incomparable cultural patrimony of the Vatican Museums, but also by a generous commitment to the Church's evangelizing mission. In every age Christians have sought to give expression to faith's vision of the beauty and order of God's creation, the nobility of our vocation as men and women made in his image and likeness, and the promise of a cosmos redeemed and transfigured by the grace of Christ. The artistic treasures which surround us are not simply impressive monuments of a distant past. Rather, for the hundreds of thousands of visitors who contemplate them year after year, they stand as a perennial witness to the Church's unchanging faith in the Triune God who, in the memorable phrase of Saint Augustine, is himself "Beauty ever ancient, ever new" (*Confessions*, X, 27). Dear friends, may your support of the Vatican Museums bear abundant spiritual fruits in your own lives and advance the Church's mission of bringing all people to the knowledge and love of Jesus Christ, "the image of the invisible God" (*Col* 1:15), in whose Eternal Spirit all creation is reconciled, restored and renewed. To you, your families and associates, I cordially impart my Apostolic Blessing as a pledge of enduring joy and peace in the Lord.

