



The Holy See

PILGRIMAGE OF THE ARCHDIOCESE OF MUNICH AND FREISING:
"BAVARIAN EVENING" IN HONOUR OF THE HOLY FATHER

ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS POPE BENEDICT XVI

Castel Gandolfo

Friday, 3 August 2012

[Video]

*Your Eminences,
Dear Confrères,
Dear Friends,*

At the end of this Bavarian evening I can only wish you with all my heart a "*Vergelt's Gott*" ["May God reward you"]. It was lovely to be here, in Castel Gandolfo at the heart of Lazio and at the same time in Bavaria. I am truly "*dahoam*" [at home], and I must compliment Cardinal Marx, because he already pronounces this word so well!

We have been able to see that the Bavarian culture is a joyful culture: "not a rowdy culture but one full of fun". We are not boorish people, it is not merely a question of amusement; rather it is a cheerful culture, imbued with joy. It is born from an inner acceptance of the world, from an inner "yes" to life, which is a "yes" to joy. The joyfulness of the Bavarian culture is based on the fact that we are in tune with Creation, in tune with the Creator himself, and for this reason we know it is good to be a person. It is true, we have to say, that in Bavaria God has facilitated our task: he has given us such a beautiful world, such a beautiful land that it becomes easy to recognize that God is good and to be happy there. Yet, at the same time, he also made it in such a way that the people who live in this land have been able to give it its full beauty by starting, precisely, with their "yes". Through the culture of the people, through their faith, their joy, their songs, their music and art it has become beautiful, because the Creator did not want to make it beautiful by himself, but

also with the help of men and women.

Now, someone might ask: is it legitimate to be so happy when the world is so full of suffering, when so much darkness and such great evil exist? Is it legitimate to be so arrogant and joyful? The answer cannot but be “yes”! Because in saying “no” to joy we render no service to anyone, we would only make the world darker. And anyone who does not love himself is unable to give anything to his neighbour, he cannot help him, he cannot be a messenger of peace. We know this from faith and we see it every day: the world is beautiful and God is good. And because he became man and came to dwell among us, because he suffered and lived with us, we know once and for all, and every day: yes, God is good and it is good to be a person. We live from this joy and starting from this joy we also try to bring joy to others, to repel evil and to be servants of peace and reconciliation.

Now, of course, I ought to thank everyone, one by one, but the memory of an old man is not reliable. I therefore prefer to refrain from doing so. However, I would like to thank dear Cardinal Marx for planning this evening, for having brought Bavaria to Rome and thereby making the inner unity of the Christian culture tangible. I would like to thank him for having brought together the Bavarians of our Archdiocese, from Lower Bavaria as far as the *Oberland*, from the *Rupertigau* Region to the *Werdenfelser Land*. I would like to thank the announcer, who made us the gift of speaking Bavarian so beautifully. I do not think I could speak Bavarian and at the same be so “uplifting”, but she has been able to. I thank all the groups, the wind-instruments... but no, I do not even want to begin. You know it. Everything has deeply moved me and I am grateful and happy for it all. Of course, the *Gebirgsschützen*, whom I was only able to hear in the distance, deserve special thanks, because I am an honorary “*Schütze*”, even though I was once a mediocre *Schütze*. I am then particularly grateful to you, dear Cardinal Wetter, for having come: you are my direct successor in the See of St Corbinian. For a quarter of a century you have governed the archdiocese as a good Pastor. Thank you for coming!

(in Italian)

Cardinal Bertello, thank you for being here. I hope you also felt that Bavaria is beautiful and that the Bavarian culture is beautiful.

(in German)

Now, as my ‘thank you’ I can only impart my blessing to you, but let us first sing the Angelus together, and if we can the “*Andachtsjodler*” [a hymn in the form of a yodel]. A heartfelt “*Vergelt’s Gott!*”!

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