



The Holy See

*ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS BENEDICT XVI
TO PARTICIPANTS OF THE INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS
OF «PUERI CANTORES»*

Friday 30 December 2005

*Dear Young Pueri Cantores,
Dear Friends,*

I am pleased to greet you on the occasion of your Congress in Rome. I thank your President for his warm words and appreciate the spirit in which your Federation carries out and intends to continue its mission in the Church at the service of the liturgy, offering in addition a message of peace and brotherhood to the whole world.

During the Christmas season, it is especially appropriate to praise the Lord in song and to express our joy to him, thereby following the example of the Virgin Mary, who was the first to give thanks to the Lord for the mystery of the Incarnation with her *Magnificat*, which the Church re-echoes from generation to generation.

Yes, we are rejoicing; a Saviour is born to us, he has come to set us free and to call us to enter into glory with him.

The Second Vatican Council did not fail to recall how deeply the Church appreciates the role of those who through their singing contribute to the beauty of the liturgy. For "Christ is present when the Church prays and sings", and we are united to the Church in Heaven (cf. *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, nn. 7-8).

You therefore have an important mission to help God's people pray with dignity, for sacred music is a "ministerial function" in the service of the Lord (*ibid.*, n. 112).

Always remember that when "the Church prays, sings or acts, the faith of those taking part is

nourished and their minds are raised to God, so that they may offer him their spiritual homage and receive his grace more abundantly" (*ibid.*, n. 33). I therefore thank you, young people, and I know that as well as the joy of singing, your commitment is also a demanding sacrifice. I thank the adults who have accompanied you and supervise you.

As I assure you of my prayers, I impart an affectionate Apostolic Blessing to you and all the members of the Federation of *Pueri Cantores*.

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