



The Holy See

**ADDRESS OF THE HOLY FATHER JOHN PAUL II
AT THE END OF THE CONCERT OFFERED TO HIM
BY THE HUNGARIAN GOVERNMENT
ON THE OCCASION OF THE MILLENNIUM
OF THE EVANGELIZATION OF HUNGARY**

Saturday, 23 September 2000

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen,

At the end of this extraordinary concert which fits within the context of the Great Jubilee, the heart naturally feels sentiments of gratitude. Primarily towards God, the first inspirer of every genuine work of art and thus also of the wonderful Missa Solennis of the great Hungarian composer Ferenc (or Franz) Liszt. However, my gratitude is then immediately addressed to all who planned this splendid concert and prepared, organized and performed it.

My thoughts go first of all to the President of the Republic of Hungary, Mr Ferenc Mádl, to the Prime Minister and to the other State authorities, with my special gratitude to all who have honoured us with their presence today. With brotherly affection, I then thank the Cardinal Primate László Paskai and Archbishop István Seregély, President of the Hungarian Bishops' Conference.

I therefore extend a special "thank you" together with my deepest appreciation of the excellent performance to Maestro Domonkos Héja and the musicians of the Danubia Symphonic Youth Orchestra, as well as to Maestro Mátyás Antal, to the soloists and to the National Choir of Hungary.

It is very significant, 1,000 years after my Predecessor Silvester II crowned St Stephen the first King of Hungary, that the Republic of Hungary has wished to offer a special act of homage to the Bishop of Rome. This gesture not only has a high commemorative value, but expresses the awareness of the deep bond that links the Hungarian people to the Church. History bears witness

to the benefits for the nation which derived from the Christian leaven that became part of its culture. May the new millennium see further developments of this fruitful exchange on the path of genuine human progress.

In the spirit of Jubilee Year, I am pleased to take my leave of you, dear ladies and gentlemen, with the wish that in Hungary and in every other country in the world, the hearts of all may be generously committed to the service of the true good of humanity, so that peace in justice and freedom in the truth, may prevail everywhere. With these sentiments, I invoke God's blessings upon you all.

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