



The Holy See

**ADDRESS OF JOHN PAUL II
AT THE END OF THE CONCERT
PERFORMED BY THE "ALEXANDROV" ACADEMY
OF SONG AND DANCE OF THE RUSSIAN ARMY**

Friday, 15 October 2004

Dear Friends,

1. I greet and thank the Choir and Orchestra of the Russian Army, starting with the Conductor. I extend my cordial thoughts to the Cardinals, the Bishops, the Authorities and to Ambassador Litvin, Representative to the Holy See of the Russian Federation, and to the whole audience. I greet everyone and I cordially thank you.

This evening, through music and traditional songs and dances, a folkloric repertoire has been presented to us that mirrors the true temperament of the noble Russian People.

2. I thank you for it all, dear friends of the Choir and Orchestra of the Russian Army.

I am especially grateful to Mr Andermann and all those who in various ways helped to organize this musical event. I also thank the Italian Radio and Television which have broadcast it across the world.

Upon each and every one and especially upon the members of the Academy of Song and Dance of the Russian Army, I invoke the protection of the "Mother of God" of Kazan, whose icon was recently returned to Russia, a Land particularly dear to me.

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