



The Holy See

**ADDRESS OF THE HOLY FATHER JOHN PAUL II
TO THE VIENNA PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA
AT THE END OF THE CONCERT OFFERED IN HIS HONOUR**

Thursday 8 June 2000

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen,

1. I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude for this special concert which the Republic of Austria has wished to offer me for the Great Jubilee. It is a moment of great spiritual significance, which is part of the already rich artistic programme for the Holy Year 2000.

I am particularly grateful to Mr Strasser, the Republic of Austria's Interior Minister, whom I thank for coming here. I also greet the Cardinals, my Brother Bishops, the representatives of public life and the institutions, as well as the organizers who made this performance possible through their collaboration. I express my grateful appreciation to Maestro Riccardo Muti, who interpreted the full depth of the Mass in B Minor score with elegance and extraordinary sensitivity. This is also true of the soloists, the professors of the Vienna Philharmonic and the members of the Arnold Schönberg Chorus.

2. Through this splendid performance of the "Great Mass" by Johann Sebastian Bach, we were able to meditate with spiritual enjoyment on the Latin texts of the Eucharistic liturgy presented once again through the mysterious and universal language of music. Once again we could experience that artistic beauty offers privileged access to the Mystery and to the satisfaction of the interior need for light and peace.

I hope that revisiting the heritage left to us by past generations will encourage a new season of artistic creations which, by opening the minds and hearts of the people of the new millennium to the "Beautiful" and the "True", will help them to rediscover the greatness and dignity of their human vocation.

I entrust my wishes to God's fatherly Providence, as I affectionately impart my Blessing to each and every one.

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