



# The Holy See

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CONCERT OFFERED TO THE HOLY FATHER  
BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY

***ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS BENEDICT XVI***

*Clementine Hall*  
*Saturday, 18 November 2006*

*Mr President of the Republic,*  
*Your Eminences,*  
*Venerable Brothers in the Episcopate,*  
*Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen,*

I would first of all like to express my personal thanks in particular to Daniel Stabrawa, Christian Stadelmann, Neithard Resa and Jan Diesselhorst, the four musicians of the "Philharmonia Quartett Berlin", for their brilliant performance at this concert.

Distinguished Gentlemen, in your 20 years of concert performances together as a string quartet, you have acquired international fame. Today too, you have confirmed this with your refined style, your perfect way of playing together and a deep richness of expression in the delicate nuances of tone and marvellous harmony of your ensemble.

Playing together as soloists not only requires the individual to make the most of all his technical and musical skills in playing his own part, but at the same time, he must also know how to stand back to listen attentively to others.

Only if the soloist succeeds in doing this, that is, if no one monopolizes centre stage but in a spirit of service fits in with the whole group and as it were makes himself available as an "instrument" so that the composer's thought can become sound and thus reach the hearts of listeners, only then is the performance truly great, like the one we have just heard.

This is also a beautiful image for us who, in the context of the Church, are committed to being "instruments" in order to communicate to people the thought of the great "Composer", whose work is the harmony of the universe.

Thank you, Mr President of the Republic, for making it possible for us to have this intense experience of listening to precious music. I am likewise grateful to you for the cordial words with which you greeted us and prepared our minds to listen to this masterful musical performance.

I also address my heartfelt thanks to all those who contributed to organizing this concert. Dear Mr President, you could not have given me any more beautiful a gift than this!

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