



The Holy See

**ADDRESS OF THE HOLY FATHER
POPE JOHN PAUL II
AT THE CONCLUSION OF THE CONCERT
PERFORMED ON THE OCCASION
OF THE CANONIZATION OF EDITH STEIN**

Sunday, 1 October 1998

1. Today, which has seen Teresa Benedicta of the Cross raised to the honours of the altar, has ended with a solemn *Te Deum*. We have had the joy of attending an extraordinary musical performance, which has helped us to meditate on and to contemplate God's merciful work. As I think again of the melodies we have heard, something Edith Stein said comes to mind: "There are circumstances in which we understand each other more easily without words". When music expresses the noble sentiments of the human spirit, it does not need words to be understood. It is a universal language, profound and deeply expressive. Today's concert also shows that music can become praise to God. We thank the Lord for the beautiful experience he has given us this evening!

2. I thank the *Symphony Orchestra and Choir of the Mitteldeutscher Rundfunk* under the direction of *Prof. Howard Arman* for this wonderful gift. I am touched that my countryman, *Krzysztof Penderecki*, has come to Rome to conduct the *Te Deum* he composed and dedicated to me 20 years ago on the occasion of my election to the supreme pastoral ministry of the Church. I offer my heartfelt thanks to the musicians, performers and all who have contributed in any way to the concert's success.

3. I extend a cordial greeting to all who have come this evening: political and ecclesiastical leaders, relatives and pilgrims. I extend a special greeting to the German-speaking pilgrims who have come to Rome for the canonization of their compatriot. On behalf of those involved in preparing this important event, I greet Cardinal Joachim Meisner and Bishop Karl Lehmann, President of the German Bishops' Conference.

4. I wish to express my gratitude to the many Jewish people present here this evening, mainly from the United States of America. I warmly greet all of them. In particular, I welcome the many relatives of Edith Stein. They can be rightly proud of having in their family a woman who has given such a splendid example of intelligence and faith.

5. Dear brothers and sisters! God calls all of us to holiness and has *a plan for each of us*. At times it is difficult to discern God's plan. You need patience and fidelity, stillness and a willingness to listen. By the way, you also need to listen attentively in order to enjoy a concert like the one kindly offered to us this evening.

Edith Stein is an example and a guide for us. At the start, she too heard from afar just "a few faint notes" of the melody of God's mysterious plan. In the school of the Cross, these sounds were later harmonized and became a whole symphony.

Through her intercession, may your lives too be transformed *into a harmonious symphony to the praise and glory of God*. With these sentiments, I impart my heartfelt Blessing to you all.

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