



The Holy See

**ADDRESS OF JOHN PAUL II
ON THE OCCASION OF THE
"CHRISTMAS IN THE VATICAN" CONCERT**

Friday, 17 December 2004

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen,

1. I greet you with great joy on the occasion of the "Christmas in the Vatican" concert. This event has become one of the most important Christmas events in Rome and is popular with Romans, since its purpose is to support the building of new churches, especially in the suburban areas of our Diocese.

I wish to express my sincere hope that once again it will achieve its noble aim.

2. Various events that involve concerts or singing, such as yours, are organized in parishes, schools and many other contexts during the Christmas season. I express the wish that together with other traditional and evocative signs, such as the crib and the Christmas tree, they will make it easier for people to encounter the Saviour, born in Bethlehem, who in every epoch has offered people his message of truth and love.

Lastly, I extend my fervent good wishes for Christmas to the sponsors, organizers and musicians involved in this Concert and to all those who watch it on television.

I accompany my good wishes with a special Apostolic Blessing. Happy Christmas to you all!