



IMPORTANCE OF DIALOGUE ON LITURGICAL MUSIC AND INTERPRETATION STRESSED

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VATICAN -

The Holy Father Pope Francis has reiterated the invaluable role of liturgical music, its proper interpretation and the interpreters in the life of the Church, noting that: every Christian is “an interpreter of the will of God” through the singing of praise songs; while the Church through the songs of the faithful “interprets the Gospel as she makes her pilgrim way through history”

The Pope made this remark while addressing the over 200 participants from different parts of the world at the Third International Congress on Church Music, held recently at the Vatican, Rome. The programme was organized by the Pontifical Council for Culture in cooperation with the Pontifical Institute for Sacred Music and the Liturgical Institute of the Pontifical Athenaeum of Sant’Anselmo. The theme of the Congress was: Church Music and Interpreters: A Necessary Dialogue

According to the Holy Father: “The Interpreter of music has much in common with the biblical scholar, with the proclaimer of God’s word, but also with those who seek to interpret the signs of times, and even more generally, with all those – and each of us should be one of them! – who are open and attentive to others in sincere dialogue.”

He continued: “Every Christian in fact, is an interpreter of the will of God in his or her own life, and by his or her life

sings a joyful hymn of praise and thanksgiving to God. Through that song, the Church interprets the Gospel as she makes her pilgrim way through history. The Blessed Virgin Mary did this in an exemplary way in her Magnificat, while the saints interpret the will of God by their lives and mission.

Appreciating the talent of those engaged in liturgical music interpretation, the Pope stated: "... an interpreter, especially in the field of music necessarily 'translates' in a unique and personal way - what the composer has written, in order to create a beautiful and outstanding artistic experience. In effect, a musical work exists only insofar as it is interpreted, and thus only when someone is there to interpret it"

He continued: "A good interpreter feels great humility before a work of art is not his or her property. Recognizing that they put their expertise at the service of the community, such interpreters constantly strive to be transformed, interiorly and professionally, in order to bring out the beauty of the music and, in the context of the liturgy, to serve others through the works they perform."

Using the Psalms and some document of the Church to buttress his position on the importance of dialogue, the Holy Father described it as a three-way conversation stating: "There is dialogue, because experiencing a work of art is never something static or mathematical. There is conversation between the author, the work and the interpreter.

He added: "The artist, the interpreter and - in the case of music - the listener, all have the same desire: to understand what beauty, music and art allow us to know of God's grandeur. Now perhaps more than ever, men and women have need of this. Interpreting that reality is essential for today's world."