

Cardinal Pietro Parolin, welcomes the Choir of New College Oxford to the Sistine Chapel.

Sig. Direttore del “New College Choir”,
Mons. Direttore della “Cappella Musicale Pontificia Sistina”,
Cari Coristi,
Cari fratelli e sorelle,

I sincerely thank the Choir of New College, Oxford, under the direction of Mr Robert Quinney, for being here this evening. From its beginnings in the latter part of the fourteenth century, when about thirty boys and six lay clerks first came together, your choir has known different stages in its rich history. But, in spite of changes of circumstance and membership, the Choir has remained faithful to its original purpose, namely accompanying liturgical prayer and cultivating sacred music.

My thanks go to all benefactors, whose help has enabled this event to be organised. Your presence is a source of joy and confirms that professionalism, a love of culture, and the search for beauty and truth bring us together and show us a path we can walk in unity.

Everything in this day and age seems to rush by at such a speed that we are unable to savour, to reflect, to meditate and to grasp its significance for our existence. Art, and music in particular, is a powerful instrument, capable of speaking to heart and mind, with a specific language that is both immediate and intuitive, and helps us to ask the right questions about life and when making the most important choices.

The Eucharist, to be celebrated in St Peter’s Basilica on the Solemn Feast of St Peter and St Paul, with your presence, together with that of an Orthodox delegation, will be a tangible sign of the shared will to walk together towards full and visible unity. That is a gift of God, for which we pray continually, but one which, to a certain extent, we anticipate with our concrete initiatives.