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Mass at the Aletti Centre on its 25th anniversary

Vatican City, 9 April 2016 – Yesterday afternoon in the Redemptoris Mater chapel of the Apostolic Palace, the Holy Father celebrated Mass for the 25th anniversary of the Aletti Centre and the 20th anniversary of its Spiritual Art Workshop. The Centre, which forms part of the mission that the Society of Jesus performs in the Pontifical Oriental Institute, is a place of intercultural encounter and reflection, dedicated principally to scholars and artists of Christian inspiration from central and eastern Europe, and promotes the co-existence of Orthodox and Catholics of Oriental and Latin rite, focusing on the growth of each person in his own Church, in the love of the sole Christ.

For example, the Spiritual Art Workshop's first great works were the mosaics that cover the greater part of the Redemptoris Mater chapel, realised in 1990 under the guidance of Fr. Marko Rupnik, S.J.

The Mass was attended by around eighty people, members of the Centre's community, artists from the Spiritual Art Workshop and members of the Cardinal Tomas Spidlik Theology Workshop, an initiative of cultural reflection promoted by the Aletti Centre. Numerous priests concelebrated, including Fr. Rupnik, founder and director of the Centre, and Fr. Milan Zust, S.J. superior of its religious community.

The liturgical texts were those of the day, and the Pope commented on the readings in his usual style, typical of the Santa Marta homilies, paying special attention to the joy of the apostles, "content to be considered worthy of suffering dishonour in Jesus' name", and the path of service taken by followers of Jesus, which is also a source of joy and happiness. He concluded with reference to Our Lady, in contemplation of an icon donated by the Aletti Centre, in which Mary appears at the centre, but in reality it is Jesus Who is central and descends towards us from the hands of the Mother. The prayer of the faithful was carried out in a simple Oriental style, according to Fr. Federico Lombardi, S.J., director of the Holy See Press Office.