

31 May 2014

Maestro Arvo Pärt

A world-renowned composer — the most-performed living composer in the world today — you have given your life to the creation of a vast body of musical compositions that have been received by a diverse and devoted listenership. Your fervent admirers, regardless of their religious faith, perceive in your work the breath of the Spirit.

Your music reaches people where they are — as seekers of God, seekers of truth, seekers of purity — and nourishes their way;

Your works bring the Holy Scriptures — notably the Psalms, the Passion of Our Lord, the prologue of the Holy Evangelist John — into a new light, revealing in them new depths;

Your settings of sacred texts and prayers highlight their purity and profundity. Through these compositions, you invite the world on a journey towards the love of God and the repentance of sins — a journey from the Old Adam to the New Adam;

Your musical work, both with and without text, weaves the inextricable threads of suffering and of consolation, of loss and of hope, of sin and forgiveness, in ways that are accessible to people from all walks of life, especially to those who are themselves suffering;

An Orthodox Christian steeped in the Church, through its Fathers and its liturgical and prayer life, your oeuvre breathes its ethos, even as it testifies to your broadly ecumenical heart;

A spiritual son of Archimandrite Sophrony, you have given musical life to his teachings, most especially through your settings of the texts of his own staretz, St. Silouan of Mount Athos;

In all, you have become a true minister of the Word, inspiring, consoling, challenging, and enlightening all those who hear your music.

In recognition of your immeasurable contribution, which, consonant with the mission of St. Vladimir's Seminary, represents a deep penetration of contemporary culture by the life and teaching of the Church, we are pleased to affirm that:

By virtue of the power vested in the Board of Trustees and the Faculty of St. Vladimir's Orthodox Theological Seminary by the Board of Regents of the University of the State of New York, the degree of Doctor of Sacred Music *honoris causa* is bestowed upon Arvo Pärt.