

ADDRESS TO THE HOLY FATHER

8 November 2012

WARNER ARBER

President of the PAS

Your Pontifical Academy of Sciences comes before you on the opening day of the Workshop on ‘Neurosciences and the Human Person’, which follows its Plenary Session on ‘Complexity and Analogy in Science: Theoretical, Methodological and Epistemological Aspects’.

Holy Father, we are deeply thankful for your constant solicitude towards our Academy, which is also evident in the appointment of two new Academicians, Physics and Engineering Professor Vanderlei Salvador Bagnato from Brazil and Development and Agricultural Economics Professor Joachim von Braun from Germany, whom we are honoured to introduce to you today. In addition, this year Your Holiness will also award the prestigious Pius XI Medal to two young scientists, genomics researcher Trees-Juen Chuang from Taiwan and chemistry researcher Ulrich Poschl from Austria.

Let me say we are very satisfied with the activity and works of your Academy in the last two years. The three meetings that we have held since our 2010 Plenary Session have focused on three important topics: Fate of Mountain Glaciers in the Anthropocene, Subnuclear Physics, and New Developments in Stem Cell Research: induced Pluripotent Stem Cells and their Possible Applications in Medicine. In addition, this year’s Plenary - with its satellite workshop on neurology as an example of complexity - is very crucial to achieve our statutory goals. We will extend our future meetings to any other topic based on available scientific knowledge that may serve for the sustainable development of humanity and long-term sustainable development of nature. The Pontifical Academy of Sciences tries to fulfil its mission of critically interpreting and establishing a hierarchy of the proven scientific acquisitions and application projects to collaborate at the proper level in your project for a new evangelization, especially in this Year of Faith. We feel very fortunate to have a Pope who has come from our Academy, and we are aware of your understanding and are close to your concerns and your mission to teach Truth, Good and justice. Therefore, Your Holiness, we look forward to listening to your wise words that will certainly enlighten and guide our Academy’s course of action.

We are mindful of the many duties that your high office places upon you, not least the recent and demanding Synod of Bishops, in which I was invited by you to take part, for which I thank you also on behalf of our Academicians. We are thus especially grateful to you for granting us this audience today.