Michał HELLER

PROFESSOR HELLER'S ADDRESS AT BUCKINGHAM PALACE

Your Royal Highness,

I want to express my deep gratitude and joy that the Templeton Prize comes to me through your hands.

Since I have decided to give all my money related to the Prize for founding the Copernicus Centre, an inter-university institution the aim of which will be the study of science, philosophy and theology, it is most fitting and most convenient to express my gratitude with Copernicus' own words.

In the Book One of his *De Revolutionibus Orbium Coelestium* he writes:

> Among the many and various pursuits in learning and the arts on which the genius of man is nourished, I believe that we should embrace especially and pursue with the greatest zeal those which are concerned with the most noble subjects and those which are best worth knowing. Such are those which deal with the divine revolutions of the universe. [...] What is nobler than the heaven, the heaven which contains all noble things? [...] If the importance of the arts is reckoned by the subject matter with which they deal, the foremost among them by far is that which some call astronomy. [...] but many of the ancient call the consummation of mathematics.

I find this expression marvelous and wonderful. If we agree with the great philosopher and mathematician, Gotfried Willhelm Leibniz,

who said that "when God calculates, the universe is being created", then indeed the science of the universe is "the consummation of mathematics".

Then Copernicus goes on by saying that the science of the universe "turns away the mind of man from vice and directs it towards higher things", and gives "an astonishing joy of the spirit".

These words might seem too solemn and too faraway from our everyday life. However in the fact that they are far from our everyday concerns consists their power and force. They are too solemn, but if they are uttered by a genius, like Copernicus, they acquire their true meaning.

And with these words and with this meaning I thank you, Sir, once more.