



On October 11, 2008 the Valentin-Rathgeber-Society bestowed honor on its honorary member Prof. Dr. Franz Krautwurst in regard of his 85th birthday in the Valentin-Rathgeber-House as a lifetime achievement award. Krautwurst is widely considered to be the leading expert in regional music history. In numerous contributions he cared about life and work of Valentin Rathgeber. He wrote many pioneering articles that have influenced the research on Rathgeber's life to a great deal. Down to the present day he comments to the topic Valentin Rathgeber in a profound way demonstrated by his recent article on „Valentin Rathgeber in St. Gallen (1731)“. The Rathgeber research owes many new and interesting stimuli to the indefatigable diligence of the jubilarian. One has to be curious on the unknown sources he will reveal in the future.

After the address of welcome by the 3rd mayoress Ehrentraud May followed the festive lecture of President Dr. Erasmus Gass with the promising title "A cow belongs in the stable, a monk in his monastery' - Escape out of the monastery in the 18th century". Gass chose this topic on the occasion of the 270th anniversary of Rathgeber's homecoming back to the monastery of Banz in autumn 1738. In his lecture Gass highlighted many examples of Frankonian monks leaving their monastery due to different reasons. Some escaped due to love affairs, struggle in the convent, one's own impermanence or trouble with faith. The "Carnal Devil" bears often the blame for a hasty escape. In case the renegades arrived at a Protestant foreign country, converted to Protestantism and married, a return back to the monastery was impossible. In case they were caught on the run, they were threatened with incarceration lasting at times even several years. Only twice two monks escaped for studies in Saxonia. Both of them returned rather soon. Thirst for education was most probably not the main driving force for the flight. This holds true even for Rathgeber who possessed an official writing by his abbot during his journey.

After this lecture followed the laudatory speech on the jubilarian Prof. Franz Krautwurst by Hermann Ullrich, Professor in Schwaebisch Gmuend. Ullrich rangend from the jubilarian's childhood to the present time and mentioned numerous unknown details that highlight the

jubilant's musical life. Already in his early childhood Krautwurst discovered his love to music. By his academic teachers he took notice again and again of the importance of the petite masters he described in detail in his studies. He published numerous contributions on the life and oeuvre of the Oberelsbach born monastic composer Valentin Rathgeber that have been important for the ongoing research. With reason he is called the nester of Rathgeber research.



After the profound laudatory speech followed the festive presentation of the Festschrift. At the laudator's suggestion the Valentin-Rathgeber-Society Oberelsbach has assembled all contributions of last year's symposium together with further articles as well as all festive sermons of the anniversary year in one volume and dedicated this symposium volume on the occasion of his 85th birthday to the jubilant as a lifetime achievement award. The volume "I. International Rathgeber-Symposium - Rathgeber in Context" covers over 300 pages and could be purchased at the Valentin-Rathgeber-Society for only 19,50 €. It is an important source of information and casts especially light on the context and the reception history of Rathgeber.

Numerous dignitaries of church, politics and society expressed their greetings and good wishes. In spite of many other obligations Auxiliary Bishop Helmut Bauer insisted on coming to the ceremonial act and on communicating the heartiest greetings of the diocese's administration. Especially the jubilant's work on sacred songs should be considered at the revision of the songbooks. Furthermore the deputy Adolf Buettner congratulated the jubilant on behalf of Erwin Dotzel, President of the District Council, as well as Helmut Will, District Viceadministrator. Kuno Holzheimer expressed his greetings for the Bavarian Music Academy Hammelburg and pointed out that the Music academy also has a Valentin-Rathgeber-Room. Paul Kolb, a native from Oberelsbach and President of the Choral Circle Schweinfurt in the Frankonian Choral Association e.V., wrapped up the greetings. The jubilant was obviously deeply stirred by all greetings and blessings and heartily thanked everybody. Subsequently followed a visit to the Rathgeber-Room. Furthermore, one had the chance to talk to the jubilant. The Tenor Charles Jurgensmeier, Professor for Music History and Choir in Chicago, cared about the music together with Berthold and Erasmus Gass and sang the two arias „Ubi Jesu" and „Ad mensam" out of Rathgeber's Opus X.