

## Olympic Games

by Ferenc Mátyás

*To take up the challenge on the sword of peace for the olive branch –  
that is real joy, manful bravery ;  
to fight as the ancient poets described in days of yore, pitting one's physical  
strength against another, for the exalted aim ;  
to show in the ring or high on the trapeze who is the strongest and most daring gymnast ;  
to make our world echo with the music of gladness and the joy of living ;  
and to leave the child of our age in rapturous happiness,  
that the soul may carry the torch in honour of Zeus in relay from Olympia ;*

*since the peace of the gods does not permit any hostility,  
let not the sword of peace be marred by flames burning on the tombs of soldiers,  
or by the rattling of bones,  
but let the champion conquer, in the triumph of the body beautiful,  
independent of any discord or language barrier ;  
let hearts beat together, conquering anger and hatred,  
for lo ! the ships of Theodosius' ban have sailed far into the past*

*and the sword of peace is once more shielded by the ancient gods ;  
the rays of bright sunshine alight on the champion's shoulder like a bird of peace,  
and even the crickets in the fields never cease their echo of the anthems of the peoples  
while wild flowers burst forth in joy and pleasure,  
and the oriole proudly shows the world his golden medal.*

Published in the "Népszabadság" daily newspaper in Budapest on the day of the opening ceremony of the XIIIth Olympic Winter Games in Lake Placid.