



November 2013

Dear Guests and Dear Olympian friends,

I am here with you today to celebrate the 150th birthdate of Pierre de Coubertin, one of my ancestors and I must tell you that the Coubertin family is moved by your kind invitation to share this afternoon with you all.

There is one very good reason for that and this is that throughout Pierre de Coubertin endeavors, the German people, and in particular its athletes, have been strong supporters of his ideas: Better character education through sport and searching for excellence through fair and friendly competition. And now, a further evidence of this support: the newly elected President of the IOC is a German athlete, Thomas Bach.....

I am also pleased today because the prizes that the German Pierre de Coubertin Committee will give in a few moments, will go to 3 individuals and a whole editorial staff whose passion for Sport and the spirit of Olympism led them to produce very interesting works:

- A young student who wrote a thesis on the influence of the Catholic church on Pierre de Coubertin's works. An interesting topic as, at that time, Education in France was very much restricted to the "Mind" and intellectual competition, forgetting that the "Body" was key to achieve well balanced life. The Catholic Church at that time was not particularly forward thinking except for a few religious men such as Father Didon.
- A Photographer, who, I am told, took thousands of photos of athletes over 9 Olympic Games. As we all know, sport photos are a feast to our eyes, so important it is to capture a second in the emotion of an athlete performing to his best, his extreme concentration and the joy he finally expresses after the effort and when excellence is rewarded.
- A Journalist together with the editorial staff who chose to write articles and books under the generic title of the "Olympic Flame". So much so that the Olympic flame is one of the most popular symbol of Olympism going back to ancient Greece, and which encapsulate these fundamental values of friendship, warmth and truce.

So for all these reasons I wish to thank you all and specially the prize winners, on behalf of the Coubertin family and of the International Pierre de Coubertin Committee.

Antoine de Navacelle de Coubertin