



# The Holy See

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**ADDRESS OF JOHN PAUL II  
TO THE PLENARY ASSEMBLY  
OF THE PONTIFICAL COMMISSION  
FOR SOCIAL COMMUNICATIONS**

*Friday 20 March 1987*

*Dear Cardinals,  
Venerable Brothers,  
My brothers and sisters in Christ.*

1. It is a pleasure to greet you and to thank you as you conclude the annual plenary meeting of the Pontifical Commission for Social Communications.

Your work is immensely important for the Church and for the world. Our Lord asked his disciples to teach all nations, and the communications media are now able to reach all nations, so that a word spoken once can indeed be a word that reaches and teaches the entire human family.

The word spoken once which should reach and teach the entire human family is Jesus Christ, the Word made flesh. His truth is the good news for which the world is hungry. His love is the lifegiving fountain which the world craves.

2. The word of God is able to reach a waiting world when the celebration of the Mass is transmitted to many nations. The Liturgy of the Word introduces or makes known more deeply the saving message of Christ; the Liturgy of the Eucharist truly proclaims the mystery of our faith: that Jesus died and rose again that we might live forever, and that he continues to offer himself to those who believe as spiritual nourishment on our pilgrimage to eternal union with him.

Thus, I cannot stress enough the importance of the international transmissions of the liturgies of Christmas and Easter begun by the Commission. These transmissions enable millions of the faithful to pray in union with the Pope and with their fellow Catholics throughout the world, and they enable millions of others to experience what we believe and to pray with us.

Television and radio transmissions also bring together people throughout the world to follow in prayer the Way of the Cross on Good Friday.

Furthermore, last October, many religious leaders came together in Assisi to pray for peace. Radio and television enabled many others to join in that prayer; reports in the print and electronic news media enabled yet others to renew that prayer and to seek that conversion of heart without which true peace is not possible.

Next June, on the vigil of Pentecost, the day when the Mother of God joined her Son's disciples in the Upper Room to await the coming of the Holy Spirit, television and radio will not only make it possible for hundreds of millions of people to join in prayer with the Pope in Rome but will also transmit their prayers and responses so that we will experience a worldwide community of prayer to Jesus through his Mother Mary. As on the first Pentecost, when all heard the message preached by the Apostles in their own languages, so on this Pentecost many will hear the message of Christ in their own languages and will have their own prayers heard throughout the world in a symphony of praise to God: Creator, Saviour and Sanctifier.

3. The instruments of communication which make such shared experiences possible are the "mirifica", the "wonderful things", of which the Second Vatican Council spoke in its Decree a "[Inter Mirifica](#)".

I know that your Commission is considering ways in which to recognize the efforts of those who have utilized these instruments of communication to the best advantage possible. I am also aware that you are preparing a document of guidance and support for families, to enable them to make fruitful use of these communications media and to resist the use of the media for images and messages which destroy rather than strengthen the moral fibre of the family and of society.

All of these initiatives are timely and significant, so that the communications media may indeed serve to "teach all nations" the good news of the dignity and the destiny of those who are truly children of God and heirs of heaven.

May Our Lord, through the intercession of his Blessed Mother, continue to guide your work. I willingly impart to you, your loved ones and your associates in this most important work of communications my Apostolic Blessing.

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