



# The Holy See

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**ADDRESS OF THE HOLY FATHER JOHN PAUL II  
TO THE BROTHERS OF CHRISTIAN INSTRUCTION  
OF PLOËRMEL DURING THEIR GENERAL CHAPTER**

*Thursday, 6 April 2000*

*Dear Brothers of Christian Instruction of Ploërmel,*

I am happy to welcome you as you meet in Rome for your General Chapter. In particular I greet Bro. José Antonio Obeso Vega, Superior General, who has just been re-elected for a new term. In this Jubilee Year your reflections on the theme "Rediscovering and Living the La Mennais Charism with Creative Fidelity" has special significance. Indeed, the Jubilee period prompts us to conversion of heart and to lifting the eyes of our faith to new horizons in proclaiming the kingdom of God (cf. Bull of Indiction *Incarnationis mysterium*, n. 2).

To see God and to see God in everything is the motto that inspired the whole life of the Ven. Jean-Marie de La Mennais, your founder with Fr Gabriel Deshayes, and which he left as an inspiration for your mission as educators of youth: *God alone*. Many young people are formed in your institutes, which have been marked by these words that sum up your spirituality so well and also continue to be a source of dynamism in their Christian life. Dear brothers, continue to be men of prayer and contemplation, souls thirsting for God alone. "Detach yourselves from nothing, in order to attach yourselves to everything" (*Mémorial*, 90), through renunciation, poverty and humility. Then in abandonment to Providence, you will be able to dedicate yourselves enthusiastically to your educational work and to be authentic teachers of life for young people. In a world marked by frailty and social and family difficulties, it is important to prepare the future by offering young people an integral formation that will enable them to discover spiritual, moral and human principles for building their personality and participating actively in society.

In the apostolic spirit which Fr de La Mennais has passed on to you and which has grown

throughout your history, I warmly encourage you to give an ever more vigorous impetus to your institute's missionary commitment. Today too, the proclamation of the Gospel through education is more necessary than ever. In pursuing your efforts to form the young, especially in disadvantaged social situations or among the most needy, courageously show that "the preferential love for the poor finds a special application in the choice of means capable of freeing people from that grave form of poverty which is the lack of cultural and religious training" (*Vita consecrata*, n. 97). In your generous work undertaken each day among young people, be teachers who are totally dedicated to the glory of God and the service of his kingdom!

Your way of living these commitments invites you to find in community life a place of sanctification and inspiration, to discern the Father's will together in a union of mind and heart, and to carry out his plans in fidelity to the founding charism. May your communities, with the lay co-workers who share in a particular way in the institute's spirituality and mission, boldly arouse Gospel responses to the great questions in the world of young people!

In the joy of the Jubilee, I entrust you to the protection of the Virgin Mary, Mother of Mercy, and warmly impart a special Apostolic Blessing to you, which I extend to all the Brothers of Christian Instruction of Ploërmel and their co-workers, as well as to the young people who benefit from your educational service.

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