



The Holy See

**LETTER OF HIS HOLINESS
POPE JOHN PAUL II
TO CARDINAL JEAN-MARIE LUSTIGER
FOR THE 50th ANNIVERSARY OF THE FIRST BROADCAST
OF MIDNIGHT MASS CELEBRATED IN THE CATHEDRAL
OF NOTRE-DAME DE PARIS**

*To Cardinal Jean-Marie Lustiger
Archbishop of Paris*

On Christmas Eve in 1948, Fr Raymond Pichard, O.P., in agreement with the Société française de Télévision, had the good idea of the first-ever world-wide broadcast of the Midnight Mass celebrated in the Cathedral of Notre-Dame de Paris. On the occasion of the 50th anniversary of this event, which marked an important turning point in the proclamation of the Gospel, I willingly join in prayer all who contribute to the broadcast *Le Jour du Seigneur*, the pastors and faithful who are once again gathered in Notre-Dame de Paris on this occasion and all those who are following Christmas Mass on radio and television.

Through the media, the French public transmission offers Catholics and people of goodwill the opportunity to see or hear religious broadcasts: this also permits members of the faithful who are unable to go for serious reasons to participate in the Eucharistic celebration, especially on the days and times which, for the Christian community, are dedicated to Sunday and feast-day gatherings. This Christian presence over the air is part of the tradition of dialogue and openness which do France honour.

I ask Christ, whose birth among men we celebrate on this most holy night, to be close to all who are taking part in this liturgy or joining in it thanks to the media. May the Saviour, who came to bring peace to the world, give comfort and hope to all people of goodwill, so that together they can build a society of justice and love! On the occasion of this 50th anniversary of the televised broadcast of Mass, I cordially impart my Apostolic Blessing to all who contribute to this broadcast and its transmission, as well as to the celebrants, preachers, Christian communities and faithful who join in the liturgy by means of radio and television.

From the Vatican, 2 December 1998.

IOANNES PAULUS PP. II

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