



The Holy See

ADDRESS OF POPE FRANCIS TO THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS AND EMPLOYEES OF THE ITALIAN RADIO-TELEVISION NETWORK (RAI)

*Paul VI Hall
Saturday, 18 January 2014*

Video

Dear Madam President,

Dear Executive Directors and Employees of the RAI,

I extend my welcome to you all! Thank you for having come in such great numbers; And ‘thank you’ to the President for her words, which I appreciated very much.

This meeting is taking place within the context of the 90th anniversary of RAI’s first radio broadcast and its 60th in television; and it is significant that there are representatives present here from several public radio-television networks, and from associations in the field from other countries. The two anniversaries offer an occasion to reflect on the relationship which has existed between the RAI and the Holy See over the past decades, and on the value and demands of public service.

The key word that I would like immediately to highlight is *collaboration*. Both in radio and television, the Italian people have always been able to access the words and, subsequently, the images of the Pope and the events of the Church in Italy, through RAI’s public service. This cooperation is realized with two Vatican entities: Vatican Radio and the Vatican Television Centre.

In this way, the RAI has offered and still offers the users of its public service the possibility of

following both extraordinary and ordinary events. We think of the Second Vatican Council, the elections of the Popes, or of the funeral of Bl. Pope John Paul II; but we think also of the many events that took place during the Jubilee Year 2000, the various celebrations as well as the Pope's pastoral visits in Italy.

The 1950s and 1960s were an age of great development and growth for the RAI. It is good to remember a few steps: in those decades the RAI's broadcasts covered the entire country; in addition, the state-owned corporation undertook to train its directors also abroad; lastly, they increased their productions, including those of a religious nature: we recall, for example, the film *Francesco* produced by Liliana Cavani in 1966, and the *Acts of the Apostles* by Roberto Rossellini in 1969, the latter in collaboration with Fr Carlo Maria Martini.

The RAI, therefore, also through many other initiatives, has been a witness to the process of change in Italian society in its rapid transformation, and has contributed in a special way to the process of the linguistic and cultural unification of Italy.

Therefore, we thank the Lord for all of this and we carry forward the style of collaboration. However, recalling a past rich in achievements calls us to a renewed sense of responsibility for today and for tomorrow. The past is the root, history becomes the root for new initiatives, the root for present challenges, and the root of a future, of a movement forward! May the future not find us without the responsibility of our identity. May it find us with the root of our history and always going forward. I remind all of you who are present here, and all those who for various reasons could not attend our meeting, that your profession, beyond being informative, is formative, it is a public service, a service to the common good. A service to truth, a service to goodness and a service to beauty. All of the professionals who make up the RAI, the executive board, journalists, artists, clerks, technicians and workers know that they belong to a corporation that produces culture and education, that provides information and entertainment, reaching a great number of Italians every moment of the day. It is a responsibility that the proprietor of a public service cannot abdicate for any reason.

In the end, the ethical quality of communication is the result of conscientious — not superficial — attention, always respectful of people, both those who are the subject of information and the recipients of the message. Each, in his own role and with his own responsibility, is called to be vigilant in maintaining a high level of ethics in communication.

I send my warmest wishes for the year that has just begun to you, executive directors and employees of RAI and to your families, as well as to the distinguished guests of this meeting. My hope is that you will work well, and do your work with trust and hope, in order to be able to transmit it: there is such great need of this!

To the RAI, and to the other networks and associations represented here, I address my hope that

in following their aims with determination and constancy, that they may always know how to place themselves at the service of society's human, cultural and civil growth.