



## Science Orders Life

### Address to Inaugurate the Academic Year of the Pontifical Academy of Sciences 'New Lynxes'

*His Holiness declares that 'sciences order life' and observes that scholars who understand this truth make a 'valuable contribution to life itself through their activity'. He holds up Alessandro Volta as a model believer and scientist, and praises the discovery of the wireless, an instrument placed at the 'service of Christian truth'.*

The Holy Father expressed all his satisfaction at finding himself at this meeting, and at having heard so many important communications by scholars who loved science, but who did not become arid within it because sciences order life; and they understood the whole of the meaning of this word by making a valuable contribution to life itself through their activity.

His Holiness observed that this meeting was taking place in the reflection of the centenary, which had already taken place, of Alessandro Volta, just as a year ago the other inaugural sitting had taken place during the preparations for the celebration of the centenary itself.

The Holy Father was happy about the years of fertile activity of the Academy which had been described by the President with very comforting numbers, which had a meaning of high poetry, the poetry of truth. Referring to the already mentioned centenary of Volta, His Holiness said that he had followed its celebration with keen interest and although he had not been able, as he once had been able in the quiet of his 'Ambrosiana' library to leaf through the papers of that great figure, he had read again with great pleasure a few pages of the magnificent edition of his works which had been produced specifically to record that event.

His Holiness was happy about the celebration of this centenary both by the Academy and by the whole world: not only because Alessandro Volta was from Como, which was particularly near to his heart because it was the land of his forefathers; not only because in addition to being a great scientist he was a great believer, and he did not only inherit the faith from his parents but wanted to study, know and acquire it personally with a reaction which was especially violent because it took place during the century of the Encyclopaedia; not only because he was an apostle of this faith, both teaching the small catechesis to young people – as Como still remembers – and calling souls to the faith by example and through writing, souls such as Silvio Pellico and that other who in the profession of faith by Alessandro Volta found the convincing reason to profess the faith as well; not only for all these reasons was the Holy Father happy about the centenary of Volta but also because his invention, later expanded and made valuable by other inventions which improved and developed it, by Pacinotti, and by Marconi, placed an instrument of wonderful speed at the service of Christian truth so that it could be spread much more easily than was the case previously. The Holy Father, as Head of the Catholic Church, appreciated every day the valuable

benefits of this incalculable advantage and gave thanks to the Lord, giving also well-deserved praise for it to the great genius of Como.

With these thoughts and feelings the Holy Father ended his address and imparted to the whole of the Academy and in particular on all those present his Apostolic Blessing.