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## PRESS RELEASE

### Mary Robinson, former High Commissioner of the United Nations for Human Rights, speaks to the 44<sup>th</sup> General Chapter of the Brothers of the Christian Schools

**This lady, who has been the first woman President of Ireland, called upon La Salle as an institution with a very significant international presence to initiate concrete actions, based in the schools, for the defense of human rights and the promotion of the most underprivileged persons.**

Traveling from New York where she had worked in the United Nations and is presently working with a similar human rights organization, Mary Robinson, Prince of Asturias prize winner, came to Rome to address the Brothers of the Christian Schools at their Generalate, at the invitation of Brother Alvaro Rodriguez Echevarria, who sought her participation in the General Chapter of the Brothers of the Christian Schools, presently being celebrated in Rome.

There was eager expectation to hear the first feminine voice to intervene in this Chapter. Her fame preceded her: first woman President of Ireland, High Commissioner of the United Nations for Human Rights, and a world leader who places humanity above politics.

In her reflection on the analysis of today's reality, the theme that the participants in this Chapter were engaged in, her contributions to the discussions were very rich, including, among many others, a denunciation of the various fundamentalisms, of the evil of child soldiers, of the manipulation of some of the means of communication, of the lack of coherence of governments that sign accords on the rights of the child and then do not fulfill them.

She showed herself especially sensitive to discrimination against women in her intervention. The force of her denunciation made a deep impact on her listeners. One particularly strong expression that was heard was that "The police at times even rape women who come to make a denunciation rather than protect them".

Mary Robinson called upon La Salle as an institution with a very significant international presence to establish concrete, school-based actions in defense of human rights and in the promotion of persons who are most underprivileged.

**For more information: <http://www.lasalle.org/44gc/english/english.php>**