



The Holy See

CELEBRATION OF FIRST VESPERS OF PENTECOST

HOMILY OF JOHN PAUL II

Saturday, 29 May 2004

1. *Veni, creator Spiritus!*

On the Solemnity of Pentecost, this hymn *rises from every part of the Church: Veni, creator Spiritus!* The Mystical Body of Christ, scattered throughout the earth, invokes the Spirit from which she draws life, the vital Breath that enlivens her existence and action.

The Antiphons of the Psalms have just reminded us of the *experience of the disciples in the Upper Room*: "On the day of Pentecost they were all together in one place" (Antiphon 1). "There appeared to the Apostles what seemed like tongues of fire, and the Holy Spirit came upon each of them" (Antiphon 2).

We who are gathered in this Square, which has become a *great Upper Room*, are also reliving that same spiritual experience. And like us, countless diocesan and parish communities, associations, movements and groups in every part of the world are raising to Heaven our common invocation: Come, Holy Spirit!

2. I greet the Cardinals and other Prelates and priests present. I greet you all, dear brothers and sisters who have wished to take part in this evocative Celebration.

I now extend my thoughts to the many young people in Lednica, Poland, who are united with us by radio and television.

I address my cordial greeting to you from St Peter's Square. I am praying with you, my dear friends, for the gift of the Holy Spirit. May the Comforter, the Spirit of Truth, fill you with the love of Christ to whom you entrust your future. I cordially bless you all.

3. I greet in a special way the members of *Renewal in the Spirit*, one of the various branches of the great family of the Catholic Charismatic Movement. Thanks to the Charismatic Movement, a multitude of Christians, men and women, young people and adults have rediscovered Pentecost as a living reality in their daily lives. I hope that the *spirituality of Pentecost* will spread in the Church as a *renewed incentive to prayer, holiness, communion and proclamation*.

In this regard, I encourage the initiative known as "Burning Bush", promoted by Renewal in the Spirit. This involves perpetual adoration, day and night, before the Blessed Sacrament; it is an invitation to the faithful to "return to the Upper Room", so that, united in contemplation of the Eucharistic Mystery, they may intercede for full Christian unity and for the conversion of sinners. I warmly hope that this initiative will lead many to rediscover the gifts of the Spirit, whose original source is Pentecost.

4. Dear Brothers and Sisters! This evening's celebration reminds me of the memorable encounter with the ecclesial movements and new communities on the eve of Pentecost six years ago. It was an extraordinary epiphany of the Church's unity in the riches and variety of charisms that the Holy Spirit abundantly lavishes upon her. I forcefully repeat what I remarked on that occasion: the ecclesial movements and new communities are a "providential response", "given by the Holy Spirit" to today's demand for the new evangelization, for which "there is so much need today for mature Christian personalities" as well as for "living Christian communities" (cf. *Homily at the Prayer Vigil on the Eve of Pentecost*, St Peter's Square, 30 May 1998; *L'Osservatore Romano* English edition, 3 June, p. 2).

5. *Veni, Sancte Spiritus!*

Her hands raised, the Virgin Mother of Christ and of the Church prays among us.

With her, let us implore and welcome the gift of the Holy Spirit, *the light of truth, the power of authentic peace*. Let us do so with the words of the antiphon of the *Magnificat* that we will sing in a little while:

"Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful, and enkindle in them the fire of your love; though the peoples spoke different tongues you united them in proclaiming the same faith, alleluia".

Sancte Spiritus, veni!

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