



General Animator
Teresian Carmelite Missionaries
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Reg. N° 25/2020

Dear Palautian family: peace be with you,

With these words of Jesus, I want to approach each one of you on this great day of Pentecost. The central celebrations of our faith this year are taking on a very different tone. All of humanity, like the first disciples, is frightened, or at least dismayed, concerned, by this pandemic that is upon us.

It is in this moment of global confusion, of uncertainty about what will come, of tension to control the curve of contagion, of fear of a possible resurgence, of pain for human losses, of insecurity, ... when Jesus again stands in the middle and tells us "peace be with you" (Jn 20:19).

And it is curious that this peace does not refer to the tranquility or passivity that so many pseudo-spiritual movements offer us, which only try to quiet the mind or reassure existence, but do not engage in fraternal communion and missionary fruitfulness (Cf. GS 89). The peace that Jesus brings us is directly linked to missionary sending, as the Gospel of this day tells us: "Peace be with you; as the Father has sent me, so I send you" (Jn 20:21). And it does not stop there; the missionary task is not something detached from the action and presence of God, as if it were a job assigned by a leader. The wonder, the fruitfulness, the guarantee of being God's work comes precisely from the gift of the Spirit: "Receive the Holy Spirit" (Jn 20:22), Jesus says immediately after sending his disciples and sending us. I would still add something else: receive the Holy Spirit so that you may truly be bearers of the Good News and witnesses of a presence that dwells in us and that energizes in each one of us the good, the kind, the most genuine, in short, all that we have received as a heritage from the Father.

On this day of Pentecost, together with the whole Church, I want to ask for each one of you who are reading this letter, the conscious presence of the Spirit. Yes, conscious presence, because there is no doubt that He is there, but there are times when we need to be aware that it is He who moves us and impels us, who takes away our fears and prejudices, who gives us "life, virtue, strength, fire, love" (MR 11,8). He is the One who focuses our gaze and directs our actions, our forces, to the service of our neighbor.

I want to stress the need to be aware that our whole life is carried out "with the warmth of the Holy Spirit" (Inner Castle V 2.3), because you, like me, especially in this time, have experienced how much richness there is in our interior, how much capacity to overcome adversity, what creative and creative dynamisms invade us, how supportive we are, how much we feel sorry for those who are having a hard time, how we have been able

to focus and value what is really important and necessary, what values are those that have motivated us this time, etc. All this is true, but we can live it simply as something mechanical, without thinking much about it, as a natural reaction, or we can connect it directly with the source from which all good flows, in full communion with God who gives us his Spirit, and for this reason alone we are capable of living and acting from this dynamic of good, of commitment, of dedication and care, of forgetting ourselves, with the certainty that "each day in our world beauty is born anew, it rises transformed through the storms of history" (GS 276). This is the power of the resurrection, it is letting oneself be led by the Spirit, it is being mysteriously fruitful (cf. GS 280).

There are many stories, experiences that come to my mind and heart when I write this, and I would like to mention some of them as a way of giving thanks to God and to each of the protagonists, because you have been able to welcome this presence of the Spirit in the different realities that have been presented to you.

Thanks to each of the sisters who have responsibly looked after the lives of the other sisters in the community, both those who have suffered from the contagion and those who have prevented it with their good habits.

Thanks to so many sisters who are taking on certain commitments inside and outside the community because the personnel who were doing it cannot do so, due to government restrictions, or for other reasons.

Thanks to all of you who have continued to serve those who have been abandoned and made more vulnerable because of this situation.

Thanks to the educational communities that have had to learn so many new things, and in a quick and creative way, because you could not simply wait for the passage of time, but with dedication and commitment you have continued to devote yourselves to this beautiful educational task.

Thanks to all the staff of the nursing homes, of our homes for elderly and sick sisters, who with great care and delicacy have overcome fear and continue to give the best of themselves to this Church so weakened which faces the greatest risks.

Thanks to the priests who are close to the communities, presiding over the Eucharist and being present as true shepherds, because you live your ministry with the responsibility it requires and with the dedication it deserves, giving your life as Jesus himself did.

Thanks to those who, through the media, have shortened the distances between the members of this Palautian family, offering resources that are rich in content and of great diffusion.

Thank you, in a word, to those who have transformed darkness into clarity, actively and creatively committing yourselves to this close humanity, which is suffering the consequences of this crisis.

I could go on listing so many other realities, names, places, those that are now crowding my memory and that are part of my life. To each one of you I say THANK YOU because you have witnessed that you are the Body of Christ, that our charism is alive and that the Holy Spirit is the soul that has made everything alive (cf. MR 4:12). Be conscious and remember him every day; let us invoke his presence, together with Mary who knew how to recognize the traces of the Spirit of God in great events, and also in those that seem imperceptible.

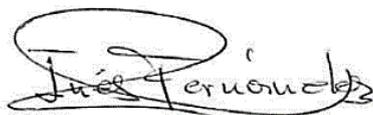
May she who accompanied that first Pentecost, help us to pray today and at all times, and with her, "the woman who was always moved by the Holy Spirit" (3S2:10), full of immense trust and firm hope, together with the whole Church, let us express what is meant by the name of Christians.

Mary, Virgin and Mother, you who, moved by the Holy Spirit, welcomed the word of life in the depths of your humble faith: as you gave yourself completely to the Eternal One, help us to say our own "yes" to the urgent call, as pressing as ever, to proclaim the good news of Jesus. [...]

Obtain for us now a new ardor born of the resurrection, that we may bring to all the Gospel of life which triumphs over death. Give us a holy courage to seek new paths, that the gift of unfading beauty may reach every man and woman. [...]

Mother of the living Gospel,
wellspring of happiness for God's little ones,
pray for us.
Amen. Alleluia (EG 288).

Rome, 30 May 2020
Pentecost Vigil



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