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Video Message of the Holy Father Francis on the occasion of the Pentecost Vigil promoted by CHARIS

The following is the text of the video message sent by the Holy Father Francis to the participants in the worldwide Pentecost Vigil organised online by CHARIS (Catholic Charismatic Renewal International Service):

Message of the Holy Father

When the feast of Pentecost came, all the believers were gathered in one place. Thus begins the second chapter of the book of the Acts of the Apostles that we have just heard. Today too, thanks to technical advances, we are gathered together, believers from various parts of the world, on the eve of Pentecost.

The story continues: “Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit” (vv. 2-4).

The Spirit comes to rest on each of the disciples, on each one of us. The Spirit promised by Jesus comes to renew, to convert, to heal every one of us. He comes to cure us of our fears - how many fears we have! - our insecurities; He comes to heal our wounds, the wounds we also inflict on one another; and He comes to make us into disciples, missionary disciples, witnesses full of courage, of apostolic *parrhesia*, necessary for the preaching of the Gospel of Jesus, as we read in the following verses what happened to the disciples.

Today more than ever we need the Father to send us the Holy Spirit. In the first chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, Jesus says to His disciples: “Wait for the gift my Father promised, which you have heard me speak about. For John baptised with water, but in a few days you will be baptised with the Holy Spirit” (v. 4). And, in verse 8, He says to them: “You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth”.

Witness of Jesus. The Holy Spirit leads us to this witness. Today the world suffers, it is wounded; we are living in

a very wounded world, which suffers, especially the poorest, who are rejected, when all our human securities have disappeared, the world needs us to give it Jesus. We are only able to give this witness with the strength of the Holy Spirit.

We need the Spirit to give us new eyes, to open your mind and our heart so as to face this moment and the future with the lesson we have learned: we are a single humanity. We cannot save ourselves by ourselves. No-one saves him- or herself alone. No-one. Saint Paul said, in the Letter to the Galatians: "There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male or female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus" (see 3: 28), united by the power of the Holy Spirit. Through this baptism of the Holy Spirit that Jesus announces. We know it, we knew it, but this pandemic we are living through has made us experience it in a much more dramatic way.

We have before us the duty to build a new reality. The Lord will do it; we can collaborate: "I make all things new", He says (*Rev 21: 5*).

When we come out of this pandemic, we will no longer be able to do what we have been doing, how we have been doing it. No, everything will be different. All the suffering will have been useless if we do not build together a more just, more equitable, more Christian society, not in name, but in reality, a reality that leads us to Christian behaviour. If we do not work to end the pandemic of poverty in the world, the pandemic of poverty in the country of each one of us, in the city where each of us lives, this time will have been in vain.

From the great trials of humanity, including the pandemic, we emerge either better or worse. We do not come out the same.

I ask you: How do you want to come out of it? Better or worse? And that is why today we open ourselves up to the Holy Spirit so that He may change our hearts and help us to come out better.

If we do not live to be judged according to what Jesus tells us: "For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, a stranger and you welcomed me ... in prison and you visited me" (see *Mt 25: 35-36*), then we will not come out of it better.

And this is a task for all of us, all of us. And also for you, members of CHARIS, who are all the charismatics together.

The third document of Mechelen, written in the 1970s by Cardinal Suenens and Bishop Helder Camara, called: "Charismatic Renewal and Service of Man", marks this path in the current of grace. Be faithful to this call of the Holy Spirit!

I am reminded of the prophetic words of John XXIII when he announced the Vatican Council, and which Charismatic Renewal cherishes in particular: "May the Divine Spirit listen in the most comforting way to the prayer that ascends to Him from all corners of the earth: Renew in our time the wonders as of a new Pentecost, and grant that the Holy Church, remaining unanimous in prayer, with Mary, the Mother of Jesus and under the guidance of Peter, may increase the Kingdom of the Divine Saviour, the Kingdom of Truth and Justice, the Kingdom of Love and Peace".

I wish for all of you, on this eve of Pentecost, the consolation of the Holy Spirit. And the strength of the Holy Spirit, to come out of this moment of pain, sadness and trial that is the pandemic; to come out of it better.

May the Lord bless you and the Virgin Mother keep you.

