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Video Message of the Holy Father on the occasion of the Ecumenical Vigil of Pentecost organized by CHARIS

The following is the text of the video message sent by the Holy Father to the participants in the Ecumenical Vigil of Pentecost organized by CHARIS:

Video Message of the Holy Father

In the book of the Acts of the Apostles, we read: “To them he presented himself alive after his passion ... appearing to them during forty days, and speaking of the kingdom of God. And while staying with them he charged them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the promise of the Father, which, he said, ‘you heard from me, for John baptized with water, but before many days you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit’. And later he adds: “when the Holy Spirit has come upon you ... you shall be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samar’ia and to the end of the earth”.

One evening like today, those fearful men and women, closed in the upper room of Jerusalem – because they knew they were being persecuted – experienced the powerful presence of the Holy Spirit, who transformed their lives forever. And their lives, transformed by the power of the Spirit, changed history.

Tonight, in the world, all of us Christians are united in prayer, awaiting the promise of the Father, the coming of the Holy Spirit. Do we await him because he has not come, because he is not there? No, he was already there at the moment of Creation and in all of us through the Baptism we have received. Every year, on the eve of Pentecost, we wish to have the same lived and certain experience of his presence in us, in our lives, in our communities.

The reality of today in the world is marked by illness, the pandemic that has taken away millions of people throughout the world, and has brought with it pain, suffering and absence. And also, in many parts of the world, hunger and entire peoples forced into exile. And war, war between brothers, war among Christians, as in the case, at this time, of the invasion of Ukraine. Other examples of this war throughout the world are the situation in

Yemen, the martyrdom of the Rohingya people and the particular situation of Lebanon, among others... war!

And faced with this world riven with strife and fearful of an uncertain future, tonight arises the luminous presence of the Holy Spirit, who gives us the strength, who gives us the courage and determination to work tirelessly for the peace that only He can give. Peace begins in families, in interpersonal and interracial relationships, in relations between Christians and with members of other religions. Peace begins with love for the enemy, for those who do not think like me... Alone we cannot achieve this. With the Holy Spirit we can. Hatred seems to have taken over of the world now. But there is a power stronger than hatred: it is the power of love, "because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us" (*Rm 5:5*).

Tomorrow, with the power of the Holy Spirit, we will seek that person who has hurt us, whom we do not love for various reasons, perhaps within our own family, and we will ask for forgiveness, or we will forgive and embrace. This is how peace begins Bit by bit, one plus one. The culture of peace, which we must spread, begins in this way. The Heads of State will work for peace, or otherwise, and they will be judged by history. It is up to each one of us to spread love and vanquish hatred with our daily actions. And our children will learn to live this, and our grandchildren will learn from them, and in this way, we will be able to do something to change the world.

Yes, we were called to this path: "when the Holy Spirit has come upon you ... you shall be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samar'ia and to the end of the earth".

This is what I wish for all of you: that you will receive the power of the Holy Spirit and that you will be witnesses. God bless you.
