



The Holy See

**ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS BENEDICT XVI
TO PARTICIPANTS IN THE MEETING
SPONSORED BY "RENEWAL IN THE HOLY SPIRIT"**

*St. Peter's Square
Saturday, 26 May 2012*

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

I welcome you with great joy on the occasion of the 40th anniversary of the foundation of Renewal in the Holy Spirit in Italy, an expression of the broader movement of charismatic renewal which swept through the Catholic Church following the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council. I greet you all with affection, starting with your National President whom I thank for his kind words to me, full of Spirit, on behalf of you all. I greet the Spiritual Counsellor, the Committee and Council members and the leaders and animators of all the Groups and Communities in Italy. On your pilgrimage, which gives you the opportunity to pause in prayer at the tomb of St Peter, may you invigorate your faith anew to grow in Christian witness, and guided by the Holy Spirit, fearlessly face the demanding tasks of the new evangelization.

I am pleased to meet you on the eve of Pentecost — a fundamental celebration for the Church and consequently important for your Movement — and I urge you to accept God's love which is communicated to us through the gift of the Holy Spirit, the principal unifier of the Church. In the recent decades — 40 years — you have striven to make your specific contribution to spreading the Kingdom of God and to building up the Christian community, fostering communion with the Successor of Peter, with the Pastors and with the entire Church.

You have affirmed in various ways the primacy of God to whom our worship is always and supremely addressed. Further, you have sought to suggest this experience to the new generations, demonstrating the joy of new life in the Spirit through a far-reaching labour of formation and many activities linked to the new evangelization and to the *missio ad gentes*. Your

apostolic work has thus contributed to the growth of spiritual life in Italy's ecclesial and social fabric, through processes of conversion which have led many people to be deeply healed by God's love and many families to overcome moments of crisis. In your groups there has been no shortage of young people who have generously responded to the vocation of special consecration to God in the priesthood or in the consecrated life. I thank you and the Lord for all these things!

Dear friends, continue to witness to the joy of faith in Christ, to the beauty of being disciples of Christ, to the power of love that his Gospel infuses into history, as well as to the incomparable grace that every believer can experience in the Church with the sanctifying practice of the sacraments and the humble and disinterested exercise of the gifts, which, as St Paul says, should always be used for the common good. Do not succumb to the temptation of mediocrity and habit! Cultivate in your mind lofty and generous aspirations! Make Jesus' thoughts, sentiments and actions your own! Yes, the Lord calls each one of you to be a tireless collaborator of his plan of salvation which changes hearts. He also needs you to make your families, communities and cities places of love and hope.

In today's society we are living in a situation that in some ways is precarious, marked by insecurity and the fragmentary nature of decisions. Valid reference points in which to find inspiration for one's own life are frequently lacking. Thus it is becoming ever more important to build life and the complex of social relations on the firm rock of the Word of God, letting oneself be guided by the Magisterium of the Church. We understand ever better the crucial value of Jesus' affirmation who says: "Everyone then who hears these words of mine and does them will be like a wise man who built his house upon the rock; and the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat upon that house but it did not fall, because it had been founded on the rock" (Mt 7:24-25).

The Lord is with us, he acts with the power of his Spirit. He invites us to grow in trust and in abandonment to his will, in faithfulness to our vocation and in the commitment to become adults in faith, hope and charity. According to the Gospel an adult is not someone who is not subordinate to another and has no need of anyone. An adult, that is, a mature and responsible person, can only be someone who makes himself lowly, humble and a servant before God and does not merely follow the current trends. It is therefore necessary to form consciences in the light of the Word of God and thus give firmness and true maturity; the Word of God from which every ecclesial and human project draws meaning and an impetus, also for building the earthly city (cf. Ps 127[126]:1). The soul of institutions must be renewed and history must be made fertile with the seeds of new life.

Believers today are called to bear a convinced, sincere and credible witness of faith, adhering strictly to the commitment to charity. Indeed through charity, even people distant from or indifferent to the Gospel Message succeed in drawing closer to the truth and being converted to the merciful love of the heavenly Father. In this regard, I express my pleasure at all you are doing to spread a "culture of Pentecost" in social milieus, offering spiritual animation with initiatives for those who are

suffering situations of hardship and marginalization.

I am thinking in particular of your work for the spiritual and material rebirth of prisoners and of former prisoners. I am thinking of the "*Polo di Eccellenza della promozione umana e della solidarietà Mario and Luigi Sturzo*" in Caltagirone; as well as of the "*Centro Internazionale per la Famiglia*" of Nazareth, whose foundation stone I had the joy of blessing. Pursue your commitment to the family, an indispensable place for an education in love and self-sacrifice.

Dear friends of Renewal in the Holy Spirit, do not grow weary of turning to Heaven: the world stands in need of prayer. It needs men and women who feel the attraction of Heaven in their life, who make praise to the Lord a new way of life. And may you be joyful Christians! I entrust you all to Mary Most Holy, present in the Upper Room at the event of Pentecost. Persevere with her in prayer, walk, guided by the light of the living Holy Spirit, proclaiming the Good News of Christ. May you be accompanied by the Apostolic Blessing which I impart to you with affection, extending it to all your members and your relatives. Many thanks!