

Pentecost Letter to the brothers around the world 2024

Eric LOZADA, international responsible

"Come, Holy Spirit... and renew the face of the earth..."

"Come, Holy Spirit, come!... Come, Father of the poor! Come, source of all our store!... O, most blessed Light divine, Shine within these hearts of ours... Heal our wounds, our strength renew; On our dryness pour your dew... Bend the stubborn heart and will; Melt the frozen, warm the chill; Guide the steps that go astray..." Amen.



Dear Brothers,

Greetings of peace and fire in the Spirit!!

How are you? What have been your joys and desolations in the ministry? It is important to take time to name and attend to them for a more balanced and joy-filled ministering. I am holding you close to my heart while I am writing this letter from Galilee Center in Tagaytay, Philippines while doing Shepherd's Training for vicars for clergy and seminary formators.

I ask: What is the face or what are faces of the earth that we beg the Spirit to come and renew? It may be good for us to stop and take a long look at our fluid world today with the eyes of faith and reason. When we don't do the seeing, we let a very politicized view as the only absolute one. There is a temptation to surrender the view of faith to the reductionist sight of secularism and to abandon reason to the deterministic lens of unbridled materialism. When we invite the Spirit to come, we admit that by ourselves we find it difficult to see, that we are blind in our unredeemed, wounded, frozen, dry and stubborn ways of seeing and understanding. So, as we pray, Come O Holy Spirit, we beg Him to intervene in our lives, to renew our hearts and minds that we may see as He wants us to see so that we may appropriately respond to the realities of our world. The prophetic invitations of Pope Francis to be joyful missionaries of the Gospel, go to the peripheries, to collectively care for Mother Earth, to be brothers and sisters all, are spirit-filled vantage points from which we see and respond to the why's, where's, what's, and how's of our world today in the light of the Gospel.

Many of us are in situations of injustice, poverty, destruction, violence, migration, minority and it is a bit myopic to see the world from a pessimistic, helpless lens. Or some of us may be in situations of better opportunities, abundance, power, privilege, honor and the temptation is to look at the world from the lens of an indifferent bystander. I feel that it is important for us, after we clarified our identity in Cebu in 2019 that we are missionary disciples of Jesus of Nazareth inspired by the footsteps of Brother Charles, that we specifically ask the Spirit to resurrect us from the tombs of comfort, narcissism, indifference, clericalism, entitlement and rekindle hearts of simplicity, tenderness, fraternal concern, generosity so that we become authentic agents of the Spirit for the transformation of our world right where are placed. We

also dream together to be builders and forgers of fraternity which is the theme of our next world assembly.



In our practice of the spiritual means of daily adoration, daily meditation of the Gospel, monthly desert day and monthly fraternal meeting along with the spirituality of Nazareth simplicity, we may not be very consistent but we continue to be inspired by our aging brothers who have been witnessing the life. Touched by the Spirit, our poverty is also our strength. In the spiritual path, numbers and age do not matter much but quality of witness, few we may be. Our constant coming back to our spiritual practices train our minds and mellow our hearts so

that our missionary engagements with the world are coming from our closeness to God in Jesus of Nazareth and our formative encounters with the poor, one person at a time. When Pope Francis has invited us to be surprised by the Spirit in our walking together and in our listening to one another in this synodal church, the process has become the message. When we dream together for a more peaceful and fraternal world, we commit ourselves to peaceful and fraternal processes at all levels and in all faces. For there could be no peace from violence and there could be no peace in communities when persons have bitter and unreconciled hearts. It was Mahatma Gandhi who said that peace is the weapon of the strong while violence is the weapon of the weak. Violence is the weapon of those who mask their fears, insecurities, envy, helplessness with armors that threaten the lives of every human being, including that of Mother Earth. So, we pray with conviction, Come Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful, renew our strength, bend our stubborn heart and will, guide the steps that go astray.

May the intercession of our big Brother, St Charles de Foucauld, strengthen our resolve to be missionary disciples of the risen Christ and forgers of fraternity in our very volatile world. Please pray for me your little brother as I continue to hold you close to my heart in prayer.

Your servant-brother,

Eric LOZADA, international responsible

