

A Message of Hope to Colleagues around the World in GPENreformation

Let us trust in God despite our fears

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

I greet you in the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. May His Grace and Love be with you.

During this difficult times of COVID-19 that the whole world is going through, I thank each and every one of you for following the measures taken by states and other partners in the fight against the pandemic.

Christians around the world have just celebrated the feast of Pentecost despite the closure of places of worship in several countries. Before the descent of the Holy Spirit to the disciples of Jesus Christ at that time, they were locked up in a room in Jerusalem. They were sad, they were afraid, they were mourning. They were wondering about their future, about the validity of their faith in Jesus Christ, about all the teachings they had received from Him. It were difficult times for the disciples.

We are in an almost similar situation. During this period of COVID-19, many Christians are afraid for their future. Our lives and habits have completely changed. Our plans have collapsed. Our relationships are being tested. Our deep convictions in God and in science are shaken.

It is in such a context that Jesus Christ appeared to his disciples on the day of Pentecost. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit. Since then, their worries and fears have been transformed into joy. They began to speak and express themselves in many languages. They began to preach and testify their faith in Jesus Christ. They found meaning in their lives again so that others who were in Jerusalem were amazed at this radical change. Thus the promise that Jesus had already given to the disciples was fulfilled: „**But 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.**“ (Acts 1:8).

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

That promise is also ours today, here and now. In these moments of fear and dread in the wake of COVID-19, Jesus Christ promises and gives us his Holy Spirit to bear witness to him wherever we are. His Holy Spirit comes to renew our strength and commitment. He comes to give us the joy and strength to serve him even more. He comes to revitalize our socio-educational projects through well thought-out and sustainable actions. It is during this period that God invites us to come closer to Him through meditation on His Word, through Prayer and through active and constructive reflection.

May our fears and anxieties caused by COVID-19 be transformed by ourselves under the light of the Holy Spirit into opportunities to serve our societies. Amen.

Written in Kigali, June 08, 2020

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