

MISSIONARIES OF CHARITY - CONTEMPLATIVE

" To do ordinary things with
extraordinary love for the
greater glory of God "



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The Holy Spirit and the Lay Missionaries of Charity

As we well know the year 1998 is dedicated to the Holy Spirit in preparation for the great Jubilee 2000. The Holy Father, John Paul II, distributed to all the Roman families the copies of the Acts of the Apostles which is called *"The Gospel of the Holy Spirit"*. It would be very much in line with the mind of the Church then if we took some trouble and found some time to read it reflectively, and to really study the Acts both individually and in groups. From the Acts we come to realize that after the Pentecostal experiences the Apostles were no more the same people. The Holy Spirit took possession of their lives, transformed them interiorly, gave them tremendous courage to give testimony to Jesus Christ the Saviour. The Cross and pain that were a stumbling block and folly before, now have become the power and wisdom of God. If the crucifixion and death of Jesus frightened the fishermen of Galilee, the Resurrection and Pentecost reconfirmed their call to follow Jesus unto martyrdom. In fact all the twelve Apostles and many of their disciples followed the Master literally to terrible tortures. *"The Apostles left the Sanhedrin full of joy that they were found worthy to suffer for the sake of His name"* (Acts 5: 41).

As we glance through the Acts of the Apostles it is really amazing to see what the Holy Spirit did to the lives of the Apostles and how through them He brought the message of Jesus to the pagan nations. The moment we understand the meaning of the Cross in our lives, our lives begin to change. We are inseparable from the Cross of Christ. A Christian is marked with the sign of the Cross. Jesus teaches us very clearly and convincingly of the necessity of suffering even persecutions for His sake: *"If they persecuted me, they will persecute you, too"* (Jn 15: 20). The grain of wheat has to fall into the ground and die to yield a rich harvest (cfr Jn 12: 24). The same idea is expressed by St. Augustine when he said: *"The blood of the martyrs is the seed of Christians"*.

It is time for us to wake from sleep and really start to live our true Christian lives. This is the hour to respond to the call of Jesus Christ, to let Him use us as it pleases Him. Let us be channels and instruments of salvation and peace to others; cause of joy rather than sadness. Let there be peace and joy and let begin with me.

Dearly beloved LMCs of the world, wake up to respond to the precious call of a loving and caring God. In the evening of life when we appear before God, He is not going to ask of our bank account here on earth; He is not going to judge us according to our status we had in life; we are not going to be judged based on our country of birth, colour or culture. He is going to ask us of how we lived our precious vocation. *"I was hungry, thirsty, naked, homeless, sick, imprisoned..."*. *"As long as you did to the least of my brothers, you did it to Me"* (Mt 25: 31-46).

As belonging to the Family of the Missionaries of Charity we also make the four vows. Our vow of Chastity means to love God above everyone, everyone in God and God in everyone; our vow of Poverty means to love God above everything, everything in God and God in everything; and our vow of obedience means to love God above myself, God in myself and myself in God. And if I do these things then I will be able to give wholehearted free service to the poorest of the poor which is our fourth vow. Hence the two essential dimensions of our life of love are: *"To love God with our whole heart, soul, strength, mind and being and to love our neighbour as we love ourselves"* (Mt 22: 34-40) is expressed in the vows we take. Understood in this way we can be the happiest people in the world despite of the many trials and hardships we have to go through. Let us make comparatively a study on our Statutes with the Acts of the Apostles. With love and prayers.

God bless you.

P. Sebastian M.C.