



The Holy See

**MESSAGE OF JOHN PAUL II
TO BISHOP MARIANO DE NICOLÒ OF RIMINI
ON THE OCCASION OF THE NATIONAL CONVENTION
OF THE GROUPS AND COMMUNITIES OF RENEWAL IN THE SPIRIT**

To my Venerable Brother

*Bishop Mariano De Nicolò of Rimini*¹. I am pleased, this year too, to address my cordial greeting to you, and through you to those taking part in the national Convention of the groups and communities of Renewal in the Spirit, held in this City of Rimini from 29 April to 2 May 2004. The theme: "*Behold, I create new heavens and a new earth... be glad and rejoice forever in that which I create*" (Is 65: 17-18), helps us to contemplate the great mystery of Christian joy. I invite each and every one to make their own the closing prayer of the Apostolic Exhortation *Christifideles Laici*, in which I asked the "Virgin of the Magnificat" to "*teach us to treat the affairs of the world with a real sense of Christian responsibility and a joyful hope of the coming of God's Kingdom, and of a new heavens and a new earth*" (n. 64). If the meetings of the groups and communities of Renewal in the Spirit are truly enlivened by the presence of the Lord's Spirit, especially when they culminate in the celebration of the Eucharist, they are events that give us "*a glimpse of Heaven on earth, and the perennial hymn of praise rises from the community of believers in unison with the hymn of heavenly Jerusalem*" (*Spiritus et Sponsa*, n. 16 *L'Osservatore Romano* English edition [ORE], 31 December 2003, p. 3), and that "*unite Heaven and earth*" (cf. *Ecclesia de Eucharistia*, nn. 8, 19)². The Holy Spirit will not fail to enrich each person's witness with the "*spiritual gifts and charisms given to the Church*" (General Audience, 27 February 1991; ORE, 4 March 1991, n. 1, p. 3). Especially important among these charisms are those that "*serve the fullness of the spiritual life*" (*ibid.*, n. 4), instilling in the faithful "*a taste for prayer*", which does not exclude "*the experience of silence*" (cf. *Spiritus et Sponsa*, nn. 13-14). The "*enormous range of charisms through which the Holy Spirit shares his charity and holiness with the Church*" (General Audience, 27 February 1991, n. 5; ORE, 4 March 1991, p. 3) will be an incentive to you, dear brothers and sisters who are taking part in the meeting, to spread love for Christ and for his Church, the "*one Mother on earth*" (cf. *Pastores Gregis*, n. 13), and to integrate the praise you raise to God, under the guidance of your Pastors, in the room that is left to you "*for the creativity and adaptation that enable [the Liturgy] to correspond closely with the need to give expression to the respective situation and culture of the various regions*" (*Spiritus et Sponsa*, n. 15)³. I warmly hope that the Renewal in the Holy Spirit may increasingly awaken in the Church that inner conversion without which human beings find it difficult to resist the enticements of the flesh and the concupiscence of this world. Our time stands in great need of men and women who, like rays of light, can communicate the fascination of the Gospel and the beauty of new life in the Spirit. With the overwhelming force of prayers of praise and the grace that flows from sacramental life, the Spirit ceaselessly pours out his charisms on the Ecclesial Community so that it may be constantly beautified and edified. It is necessary, therefore,

to respond to Christ's Gospel with the daring of faith that is mother to all miracles of love, and with that firm trust which makes us implore God for every good for the salvation of our souls. Each person, therefore, as a true disciple of Jesus, must apply himself constantly to following his teachings, making his own journey of spiritual renewal an on-going school of conversion and holiness.⁴ To witness to the "*reasons of the Spirit*": this is your mission, dear members of Renewal in the Holy Spirit, in a society that rarely seems to be steeped in the wisdom that comes from on High. Sow in the minds of believers who take part in the activities of your groups and communities the seed of fruitful hope in the conscientious fulfilment of each one's daily tasks. As I wrote in my Encyclical on the Eucharist: "*Certainly the Christian vision leads to the expectation of 'new heavens' and 'a new earth' (cf. Rv 21: 1), but this increases, rather than lessens, our sense of responsibility for the world today*"; this must make us feel "*more obliged than ever not to neglect [our] duties as citizens in this world*". Thus, you will be able to contribute to "*the building of a more human world, a world fully in harmony with God's plan*" (*Ecclesia de Eucharistia*, n. 20). May the Virgin Mary who awaited Pentecost with the Apostles in the Upper Room accompany the work of your Convention. For my part, I assure you of my special remembrance in prayer, as I impart my Blessing to you all. *From the Vatican, 29 April 2004, Feast of St Catherine of Siena, Patroness of Italy and of Europe* JOHN PAUL II