

## Pentecost Sunday

# Renewal and Reconciliation

My Dear Sisters and Brothers,

The Spirit of the Lord has filled the whole earth, alleluia; and that which contains all things has knowledge of the voice, alleluia.

On Pentecost Day last year Pope Paul VI announced to the whole world the opening of the Holy Year celebration. By then we had already learned that the theme of the Holy Year was to be Renewal and Reconciliation. During this past year the diocesan Holy Year Committee has organized many activities to make this Holy Year theme known (series of lectures explaining the meaning of Holy Year; free distribution of Bibles; Bible studies, penitential services, Holy Year pilgrimages and so on). Many of the faithful have taken part in these activities with great enthusiasm. I believe the Holy Spirit, the soul of the Church, has been active in them.

On the same feast of Pentecost this year, I fervently renew my appeal to all members of the clergy, all members of religious congregations, and to all the faithful, inviting them to continue during the rest of the Holy Year, to cooperate closely with the grace of the Holy Spirit, so that with great effort, they may reach the goal of renewal and reconciliation.

We should examine ourselves on our efforts of renewal during the past year. How much effort have we really put into it? Do we think that simply taking part once in a penitential rite suffices to renew ourselves completely? I am sure we all know that the internal renewal of ourselves cannot be accomplished in one day. We need to examine ourselves, and to strive perseveringly to avoid evil and do good. Internal renewal inevitably shows its effects outwardly. Have we been more active than formerly in loving God and man? If we have been, God is pleased with us and we are living as God wants us to live - in other words, we are marching towards the fulfillment of the purpose of the Holy Year.

The success of the activities of the Holy Year depends on our making good use of the gifts of the Holy Spirit, renewing ourselves and reconciling ourselves with God and man. With this in view, the diocesan Holy Year committee is planning, for the next six months, activities that will bring us all to reconciliation. They will propose each month a theme on reconciliation and will invite our parish priests to preach on it at Sunday Mass. We hope that this will help the faithful to have a deeper understanding of the theme and to put it into practice in all aspects of their daily life.

As we celebrate the birthday of the Church today, may the Holy Spirit who works silently in our hearts, recognize our voice, understand our needs and grant us grace to carry out with one mind and heart and with ever greater efforts the good work of the Holy Year, so that there may be a new heaven and a new earth.

+ Bishop Peter Lei

Pentecost Sunday 1974