



## Ecumenical Catholic Communion

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September 29, 2025

Dear Beloved,

May the grace and peace of our Holy Trinity be with us!

Every now and again I hear stories from my students who, while studying abroad, awaken to find themselves traveling on the wrong train, going in the opposite direction from where they hoped to be going. Panic, fear, and high anxiety are their new companions along with frustration, anger, and embarrassment coupled with the urgent questions, “How could this possibly be happening?” and “How can I get off this train and find another one going in the correct direction?”

As I travel around our United States and visit our communities, I hear many of us, as they witness the present crisis in our country, in the same state of bewilderment with all the accompanying feelings and thoughts. It is clear to many that we are, corporately, on the wrong train and going in the opposite direction in regards to our gospel values and our hopes for a faith-that-does-justice destination. Knowing history and our human tendency to repeat mistakes from which we have not learned, panic arises, and we wonder how to put the brakes on what appears to be a runaway train.

I wonder how can we as a people/country change our direction when we have such difficulty in admitting that we have made directional errors in the past? How can we slow our momentum and stop, so as to reflect upon our past, admit our mistakes and direct ourselves along a path of compassion, justice, healing and peace? My deep hope is that we will hear the call of the Holy Spirit who invites us to take right action so as to lead us in the right direction. I believe that our Holy One is calling us to awaken to the prophetic calling that we received in our baptism.

*"The human race, conscious that our problem now is survival, cries out for prophetic men and women who are deeply concerned with the suffering of our planet—people who see the evil structures that oppress the poor, the fortunes squandered on weapons of mass destruction, the useless waste of the resources of the earth, the pollution of the environment, the exploitation of women and children. Such prophetic people will feel called to confront ruthless dictators, corrupt politicians, bloated capitalists, scheming tycoons, wealthy playboys, unscrupulous drug barons, wily tricksters and hypocritical religious leaders. To save our world they must have a deep compassion and a strong sense of justice: they must be willing to go to prison and to die. But, above all, they must be men and women who have met God and are sent by God." I.*

As we hear this call of the Holy Spirit, we will be reminded of others who have gone before us responding to the needs and challenges before them. Their prophetic lives and voices inspire us and give us courage to be light, truth, and compassion in our times. Through this cloud of witnesses shine the faces of Sojourner Truth, Mohandas Gandhi, Dorothy Day, Martin Luther King, Thea Bowman, Chico Mendez, Harriet Tubman, Oscar Romero, Hans and Sophie Scholl and so many others who did what was theirs to do.

I am keenly aware that the way of Jesus whom we follow is non-violent, immersed in prayer, surrounded by community in alignment and solidarity with those who have been marginalized.

My deep prayer for us is that we will recognize again that we have all been called as Jesus was called: "The spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me: he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed, to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives and release to prisoners." (Is 61:1)

May this same Spirit fall upon each of us anew, as we respond to this life transforming call, sending us out to accomplish what is ours to do in this place and this time.

Paz y amor!

+ Pablo

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*"Darkness cannot drive out darkness, only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate, only love can do that." Martin Luther King Jr.*

1. 1. William Johnston, S.J., *Arise, My Love...Mysticism For A New Era*, (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 2000), pp 114-115.
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