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WORLD APOSTOLATE OF FATIMA

International Secretariat

REPORT MEETING WITH POPE FRANCIS

22 November 2014

The Third World Congress of Ecclesial Movements and New Communities, organized by the Pontifical Council for the Laity, in Rome, from November 20 to 22, 2014, assembled 300 participants from 40 different countries, representing about 100 ecclesial movements and new communities.



The World Apostolate of Fatima, as a public international association of the faithful, was invited to be present in this congress with two delegates and to have its own booth to display Fatima literature.

The two delegates, Prof. Américo Pablo López-Ortiz, WAF International President and Nuno Prazeres, Director of the International Secretariat, considered that this event was a great opportunity for sharing into the richness of other ecclesial movements and for promoting the Fatima message and the activities of the World Apostolate of Fatima among the participants.



The W.A.F booth at the Congress

Besides, it also contributed for strengthening the relationship with the Pontifical Council for the Laity.



Bishop Joseph Clemens, Prof. Américo Ortiz, Cardinal Stanislaw Rylko and Nuno Prazeres

On the last day, as part of the congress program, whose main theme was “The joy of the Gospel, a missionary joy”, the participants were received in the Vatican by Pope Francis. It was a great honor and privilege for the World Apostolate of Fatima to be among the restrict group that greeted and spoke to the Holy Father at the end of his audience.

Prof. Américo handed personally to Pope Francis a petition letter of 8 pages on behalf of the World Apostolate of Fatima International, written in the Spanish language, to establish the First Saturday’s Devotion in the Universal Church and spoke to him about “the forgotten part of the Message of Fatima”, that is the First Saturday’s Devotion. The Holy Father was delighted with this presentation on the Message of Fatima and showed personal signs of affection and joy to Prof. Américo as this subject is close to his paternal heart.



Prof. Américo López-Ortiz greeting the Holy Father

Briefly, it was summarized to the Holy Father that the universal practice of the First Saturday’s Devotion is a condition associated with: 1) world peace; 2) conversion of many sinners; 3) grace of final perseverance for those practicing it and 4) unity and strength of the Universal Church against inner dissensions opposing the Magisterium of the Successor of Peter; in a word, the

triumph of the Immaculate Heart of Mary promised at Fatima. The special grace of unity and strength of the Universal Church is a special assistance from Our Lady of Fatima to the petrine ministry of the Pope and it is mentioned in the correspondence between Sister Lucia and Saint John Paul II. As we are approaching the centennial of the Fatima Apparitions in the year 2017, this should be the greatest gift of the Universal Church to Our Lady of Fatima, the universal establishment of the devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary and the Communion of Reparation of the First Saturdays!

Pope Francis was overjoyed by this message and certainly appreciated vividly the assistance promised to his petrine ministry by Our Lady of Fatima in our days. This personal meeting was the longest one of the audiences. Mission accomplished! Now comes our part: Much prayer, penance and apostolic efforts offered to see that the First Saturday’s Devotion is established in our respective local churches and in the Universal Church as a sign of the definitive triumph of the Immaculate Heart of Mary promised at Fatima.

Three were the directions that Pope Francis outlined in his address to the participants of the congress: **Conserve the freshness of charisma, respect freedom and always seek communion.**

“The movements and communities you represent are now being projected into the phase of ecclesial maturity, which requires a vigilant attitude of permanent conversion, to render the evangelizing impulse increasingly alive and fruitful”, said the Holy Father.

Conversion and mission he said, are “intimately connected.



Indeed, without an authentic conversion of heart and mind, the Gospel cannot be proclaimed; at the same time, if we are not open to mission, conversion is not possible and faith becomes sterile”.

With regard to the first indication, conserving the freshness of charisma, Francis remarked that “as time goes by, there is a greater temptation to become comfortable, to become hardened in set ways of doing things, which, while reassuring, are nonetheless sterile. However, realities are more important than ideas; even if a certain institutionalization of the charisma is necessary for its survival, we ought not delude ourselves into thinking that external structures can guarantee the working of the Holy Spirit. The newness of your experiences does not consist in methods or forms, which are important, but rather in your willingness to respond with renewed enthusiasm to the Lord’s call”.

A further issue is how to welcome and accompany people today, especially the young. “Men and women today experience serious identity problems and have difficulty making proper choices; as a result, they tend to be conditioned and to delegate important decisions about their own lives to others. We need to resist the temptation of usurping individual freedom, of directing them without allowing for their growth in genuine maturity. Moral or spiritual progress that manipulates a person’s immaturity is only an apparent success, and one destined to fail. Christian education instead requires a patient accompaniment which is capable of waiting for the right moment for each person, as the Lord does with each one of us. Patience is the only way to love truly and to lead others into a sincere relationship with the Lord”.



Pope Francis greeting the delegates of the Congress in Rome

Finally, movements must not forget that “the most precious good, the seal of the Holy Spirit, is communion”. ... For the world to believe that Jesus is Lord, it needs to see communion among Christians. If, on the other hand, the world sees divisions, rivalries and back-biting, regardless of the cause, how can we evangelize? Remember this further principle: 'Unity prevails over conflict', because our brothers and sisters are always of greater value than our personal attitudes; indeed, it is for our brothers and sisters that Christ has shed his blood. In addition, real communion cannot exist in Movements or in New Communities unless these are integrated within the greater communion of our Holy Mother, the hierarchical Church. The whole is greater than the part, and the part only has meaning in relation to the whole. Communion also consists in confronting together and in a united fashion the most pressing questions of our day, such as life, the family, peace, the fight against poverty in all its forms, religious freedom and education”, concluded the Holy Father.

With this in mind, we are all called to be joyful missionaries of the Gospel of Christ, offering the world the precious message that Our Lady gave us in Fatima.

Orbis Unus Orans!

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