

Press release

Communion and Liberation accepts the invitation by the Italian Episcopal Conference to dedicate the Vigil of Pentecost to today's martyrs

Communion and Liberation accepts the invitation by the Italian Episcopal Conference to dedicate the Pentecost Prayer Vigil on Saturday, May 23, 2015 to today's martyrs, the Christians who are "victims of persecution and violence simply because of the faith they profess" (Pope Francis, April 30, 2015).

"If one part suffers, all the parts suffer with it" (1Cor 12:26). How can one remain indifferent to the suffering of our fellow Christians persecuted in so many parts of the world?

How can we not respond to the repeated appeals of Pope Francis? "There are more martyrs today than there were in the early centuries of the Church. More martyrs! Our own brothers and sisters. They are suffering! They carry their faith even to martyrdom." The Holy Father reminds us that we are in front of a new challenge that is manifested in "forms of veritable attacks on religious freedom or new persecutions directed against Christians; in some countries these have reached alarming levels of hatred and violence" (*Evangelii Gaudium*, 61).

"Taking part in the initiative of the Italian Church," said Fr. **Julián Carrón**, President of the Fraternity of CL, "we want to unite with all those who feel the wounds of today's martyrs as if they were their own, to show how close we feel to these brothers and sisters who are suffering. As part of the body that is the Church, we would like to shoulder some of the burden of incomprehension, intolerance and violence that the world that rejects Christ pours out upon the new martyrs of the twenty-first century. But precisely from these persecuted Christians we are receiving continual testimonies of people who find in their faith the adequate reason for living or dying. May their testimony awaken our faith from its torpor and indifference. Thus I invite all the CL communities in Italy and the world to the great gesture of prayer on May 23, the Vigil of Pentecost, in unity with the entire Church, by participating in the gestures organized by the dioceses."

The CL Press Office

Milan, May 5, 2015