Vatican

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Christians must do more than dream of a better world; they must take an active role in changing it, a Vatican official wrote on behalf of Pope Francis.

In a message sent Aug. 19 to the Meeting in Rimini, an annual event sponsored by the Communion and Liberation movement, Cardinal Pietro Parolin, Vatican secretary of state, said men and women must ask themselves how to bring about change in light of the "current situation in the West."

"We are once again building walls instead of building bridges. We tend to be closed instead of open to others different from us. Indifference grows rather than the desire to take the initiative for change. A sense of fear prevails over trust in the future," he said. "And we ask ourselves if, in this half century, the world has become more habitable."

To address the problem head-on, he said, Christians must first overcome the fear of change.

"No, it isn't about retiring from the world to not risk making a mistake and to preserve the faith in a sort of uncontaminated purity, because an authentic faith

always implies a profound desire to change the world, to move history," he said.

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But, the cardinal wrote, it is equally important to work toward a clear objective, otherwise "it remains blocked and no promise, no initiative can move it."

"No effort, no revolution can satisfy the heart of man and woman," he said. "Only God, who has made us with an infinite desire, can fill it with his infinite presence. That is why he became man: so that men and women can encounter the one who saves and fulfills the desire of happy days."

Assuring participants of the pope's prayers, Parolin said Pope Francis hoped the gathering would be an "occasion to deepen and welcome Jesus' invitation to 'come and see.' "

Following Jesus, he said, is the path that frees people from "the slavery of 'false infinities' — which promise happiness without being able to assure it — thus making them new protagonists on the world scene, called to make history the place of encounter between the children of God and their father and among themselves as brothers and sisters."