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Pope Leo greets a child.

Pope Leo XIV greets a child from the popemobile as he prepares to lead a Pentecost prayer vigil in St. Peter's Square at the Vatican June 7 with participants in the Jubilee of Ecclesial Movements, Associations and New Communities. (CNS/Lola Gomez)

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Vatican City — June 7, 2025
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On the eve of Pentecost, Pope Leo XIV prayed that the Holy Spirit would help Catholic lay associations, movements and communities live the Gospel before trying to preach it and would be a force for unity in the church and in the world.

"In a divided and troubled world, the Holy Spirit teaches us to walk together in unity," the pope said as he joined an estimated 70,000 people for an evening prayer vigil in St. Peter's Square June 7.

"Evangelization, dear brothers and sisters, is not our attempt to conquer the world, but the infinite grace that radiates from lives transformed by the Kingdom of God," he said. Evangelization requires walking together on "the way of the Beatitudes," being people who are "hungering and thirsting for justice, poor in spirit, merciful,

meek, pure of heart, men and women of peace."

"Jesus himself chose this path," Pope Leo insisted. "To follow it, we have no need of powerful patrons, worldly compromises, or emotional strategies."

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> —Pope Leo XIV
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The vigil was part of the Jubilee of Ecclesial Movements, Associations and New Communities. The program began about 90 minutes before Pope Leo arrived in the popemobile. The Focolare movement's international Gen Verde choir and band performed; and members of the Sant'Egidio Community, the Neocatechumenal Way, Nuovi Orizzonti and Communion and Liberation gave testimonies about how the groups helped them grow closer to Jesus and motivated them to help others.

The program was punctuated with video clips of St. John Paul II, Pope Benedict XIV and Pope Francis addressing similar Pentecost vigils with the groups.

The gifts of the Holy Spirit, given to build up the unity of the church and inspire its efforts to help others, was the common theme of the clips.

In his address, Pope Leo said "synodality" is "a word that aptly expresses how the Spirit shapes the Church."

At Pentecost, Mary and the disciples "received a Spirit of unity, which forever grounded in the one Lord Jesus Christ all their diversity," he said. "Theirs were not multiple missions, but a single mission. They were no longer introverted and quarrelling with one another, but outgoing and radiant with joy."

Popemobile in crowd

Pope Leo XIV waves from the popemobile as he prepares to lead a Pentecost prayer vigil in St. Peter's Square at the Vatican June 7. (CNS/Lola Gomez)

"Dear friends, God created the world so that we might all live as one. 'Synodality' is the ecclesial name for this," the pope said. "It demands that we each recognize our own poverty and our riches, that we feel part of a greater whole, apart from which everything withers, even the most original and unique of charisms."

"Think about it," he told the crowd. "All creation exists solely in the form of coexistence, sometimes dangerous, yet always interconnected."

"The opposite is lethal, but sadly, we are witnessing this daily," the pope said. "May your meetings and your communities, then, be training grounds of fraternity and sharing, not merely meeting places, but centers of spirituality."

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The Holy Spirit can change the world because it can change human hearts, he said. "The Spirit inspires the contemplative dimension of life that rejects self-assertion, complaining, rivalry and the temptation to control consciences and resources."

Celebrating Pentecost during a Jubilee Year, he said, is a special time to recognize the importance of walking together and showing the world the transforming power of the Holy Spirit.

"The earth will rest, justice will prevail, the poor will rejoice, and peace will return, once we no longer act as predators but as pilgrims," the pope said. "No longer each of us for ourselves, but walking alongside one another. Not greedily exploiting this world, but cultivating it and protecting it, as the Encyclical Laudato Si' has taught us."

If the groups are united among themselves and with their local parishes and dioceses, he said, "all of us will then work together harmoniously as one. The challenges facing humanity will be less frightening, the future will be less dark, and discernment will be less complicated — if together we obey the Holy Spirit!"