

special responsibility to be salt and light for all the continents, beginning with the homes of families and places of work.

And always, despite our weakness, with the joy of the daughters and sons of God, with the motherly protection and help of Our Lady of Guadalupe.

Providence has wanted me to be able to celebrate Holy Mass in this blessed sanctuary on my birthday. As Saint Josemaría used to do, I extend my hand asking for your prayers, through the intercession of Our Lady of Tepeyac, for me and for my intentions, which are those of the Church, those of the Work and those of each one of you.

Amen.

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Meditation: On the Occasion of the Beginning of the Academic Year of the Roman College of the Holy Cross, Rome (October 8, 2022)

The beginning of the academic year is always a new opportunity to turn to the Holy Spirit. We can ask him to renew in our souls gratitude for the formation we have received and, at the same time, to increase our desire to learn. We have been receiving formation in the Work for years. Therefore it is good to take advantage of the beginning of the academic year to rediscover and identify ourselves more closely with our spirit.

Formation is directed equally to the intellect, heart and will: to our whole life. May what we learn lead us to know, love and feel as very much our own the spirit and life of the Work.

We ask that the Holy Spirit come upon us as at Pentecost. May he also be for us like a purifying fire and a mighty wind. So it was for the Apostles. They, who were frightened, were completely transformed by the Holy Spirit and set out to transmit God's truth. We too now ask God for a new coming of the Paraclete in our souls, to impel and guide our whole day.

Source of security

“But when the Counselor comes,” our Lord announced, “whom I shall send to you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father, he will bear witness to me” (*Jn.* 15:26) The Holy Spirit bears witness that Christ is the Son of God; and he also bears witness in our souls that we, by grace, are children of God in Christ. Filiation is the foundation of our spirit. This is our strength and our security: to know that we are loved by a Father who knows all things and can do all things. As we experience our limitations and difficulties, let us ask the Holy Spirit to imprint more deeply on our souls the joyful assurance that we are children of God.

We remember very well how our Father experienced in a particularly vivid way this sense of divine filiation in 1931. Years later, he wrote in one of his letters: “I felt God acting, making this tender invocation germinate in my heart and on my lips, with the force of something imperiously necessary: *Abba! Pater!*” We also know that he was going through many difficulties. And thus he understood more intensely that his security did not reside in his own strength, but in being a child of God. This discovery, which the Holy Spirit made him see in a streetcar, helps us to live as children of God, in ordinary life, always and everywhere.

Divine filiation is the source of our security, of our true joy. When sadness creeps into our lives, it will be the moment to renew our faith in God’s love for us in order to recover our joy.

The truth of our life

“You also are witnesses,” our Lord said, “because you have been with me from the beginning” (*Jn* 15:27). These words remind us of the immense apostolic work that lies ahead of us. Not only in specific assignments, but always. Our whole life has an apostolic dimension; through the communion of saints, we can support and further the apostolate of the Work throughout the whole world. We will give this witness, as our Lord says, because we have been with him from the beginning. And we are truly with Christ through the action of the Holy Spirit. Being with our Lord is the root of all our effectiveness. He has called us, as he called the Apostles, so that, being with him, we may go into all the world proclaiming the Gospel.

Study and formation help us to know God better and to have him more deeply in our hearts. To know and, above all, to love. Although this is an immense and infinite truth, which we will never be able to exhaust, we can always make progress. Therefore we can say to God: give us a greater faith that you are love, and that this love is in us. May we become more convinced of this truth and may we place our security in God's love for us.

The Paraclete, the spirit of truth, guides us to know God better, and also to know ourselves better. Self-knowledge is the basis of humility. It is not only a matter of knowing our limitations and our misery, but also our greatness. We are worth so much: all the blood of Christ. Therefore when we experience our misery, let us also think of all that we are worth. Thus the experience of our many limitations does not discourage us or undermine our strength or sadden us, for it will go hand in hand with the certainty of our greatness grounded in God's love for us. This is the highest truth of our life.

Love for the Church and the Work

We also ask the Holy Spirit to increase our love for the Church, an immense multitude made up of many peoples. The Church is the Body of Christ and the universal sacrament of salvation, but she also appears to us as a group of weak people: ourselves. As we discover our limitations, may those words of our Father resound in our hearts: "This is what the Church is: Christ present in our midst, God coming toward men in order to save them, calling us with his revelation, sanctifying us with his grace" (*Christ is Passing By*, no. 131).

Thinking about the Church also leads us to consider the figure of the Roman Pontiff, successor of Peter, whose mission is to be the visible principle of unity and communion. The difficulties he has to face lead us to pray very much for him: *Omnes cum Petro ad Iesum per Mariam*, as we have learned from St. Josemaría.

We want to begin this new academic year with a youthful spirit, with an eagerness to go deeper into the spirit of the Work, into the life and writings of our Father. May we feel a special responsibility to form ourselves well, not in order to be supermen (for we are not and never will be such), but to be elements of unity. Unity especially with the origin. As the years go by,

we are moving away, from a temporal point of view, from the origin of the Work, from our Father. But, in reality, we do not move away, because he continues to accompany us from heaven. And, on our part, we have the responsibility to be closely united to the origin. In this way we will be better able to serve the Church by doing Opus Dei.

Let us open our souls ever more fully to God's grace, so that He may help us to take care of the Work, as our Father and our first brothers and sisters took care of it. And we will do so with our lives, striving to incarnate the spirit of the Work, in what is great and what is small. The Work is souls, ours and those of our brothers and sisters. Therefore, to care for the Work is above all to care for others, to live fraternity, to defend unity among everyone, knowing that we are responsible for the apostolic work throughout the world.

On that day of Pentecost, our Lady had gathered the Apostles together. Mary, Mother of the Church and Queen of Opus Dei, will obtain for us from God a new outpouring of the Holy Spirit, which will make us more *ipse Christus*, and thus more apostles.

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Speeches

On the Occasion of the Opening Ceremony of the Academic Year, Pontifical University of the Holy Cross, Rome (October 3, 2022)

The whole Church has embarked on the synodal journey to which the Holy Father has repeatedly called us. In addition to recalling the personal participation of some members of our university in the various stages of this journey, I would like to reflect today on how the spirit of synodality can be present in university life. Indeed, this “walking together” through encounter, listening and discernment can also be lived within the academic