

## **Pentecost Message 2016**

**27 April 2016**

### **Message of the presidents of the World Council of Churches at Pentecost 2016**

Dear sisters and brothers in faith,

In the name of the triune God and on behalf of the presidents of the World Council of Churches, I greet you all as we celebrate the birthday of the church on Pentecost.

Amazed and astonished, they asked, “Are not all these who are speaking Galileans? And how is it that we hear, each of us, in our own native language?” (Acts 2:7-8).

As Christians, we are unified in a firm belief that the one God is the Creator who gives life to all that is. The one God is also the Savior of all life. We know this, and we want to share this good news with all. The Savior gives us solid grounds for hope – for this world and for the world to come.

But knowing is not enough. There must also be inspiration and commitment.

That was given on Pentecost by the triune God through the Holy Spirit, when the

apostles spoke to all those people assembled in Jerusalem, with their very different backgrounds, cultures and languages. And the listeners heard, each of them in their “own native language”!

Of course, it is only by using our experiences and our cultures that we can orient ourselves in life. Yet at the same time, that knowledge gives rise to prejudice and misunderstandings. Humanity can only survive with more focus on what unifies rather than on what divides.

Today, as we celebrate Pentecost, we pray for the Spirit to fill us. When the Spirit comes to us, we can share, educate, and guide others to what is more than us and to all things good—ultimately to the triune God, whose Spirit can unite a broken world and renew every culture.

Though mistrust and fear rule the world, let us be grounded in our knowledge of God and open to the Spirit in order to pursue a true pilgrimage of justice and peace – in our personal lives and in and between our lands! That is our task as Christians and as churches.

Yours in Christ,

*Archbishop Anders Wejryd*

The presidents of the World Council of Churches

- Rev. Dr Mary-Anne Plaatjies van Huffel, Uniting Reformed Church in Southern Africa
- Rev. Prof. Dr Sang Chang, Presbyterian Church in the Republic of Korea
- Archbishop Anders Wejryd, Church of Sweden
- Rev. Gloria Nohemy Ulloa Alvarado, Presbyterian Church in Colombia
- Bishop Mark MacDonald, Anglican Church of Canada

- Rev. Dr Mele'ana Puloka, Free Wesleyan Church of Tonga
- H.B. John X, Patriarch of the Greek Orthodox Church of Antioch and All the East
- H.H. Karekin II, the Supreme Patriarch and Catholicos of All Armenians