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Message of the Holy Father Francis to the participants in the 40th European Meeting of the Taizé Community (Basel, 28 December 2017 – 1 January 2018)

The following is the message sent by the Holy Father Francis, signed by Cardinal Secretary of State Pietro Parolin, to the young people attending the fortieth European Meeting of the Ecumenical Taizé Community, currently being held in Basel, Switzerland, until 1 January 2018.

Message

Dear young people,

You have come from all over Europe and also from other continents, to experience in Basel, at the crossroads of Switzerland, France and Germany, the fortieth meeting organized and animated by the Community of Taizé. And you are driven by the desire to explore together the sources of joy. This is the theme that will guide your reflections and enlighten your prayer. From this perspective, Pope Francis wants to assure you of his great spiritual closeness. Indeed, as he wrote in the Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium* “The joy of the Gospel fills the hearts and lives of all who encounter Jesus. Those who accept His offer of salvation are set free from sin, sorrow, inner emptiness and loneliness. With Christ joy is constantly born anew” (1). The Holy Father rejoices in the knowledge that you have chosen to participate in this meeting to welcome and deepen Jesus’s message, which is a source of joy for all those who open their hearts to Him. And he thanks you for responding to the call of the Lord who brings you together in the joy of His love.

The Pope encourages you to let yourself be filled with this joy that is born of the friendship with Jesus, and which never closes us to others or to the sufferings of this world. And he invites you to remain connected with the Lord, in prayer and by listening to His Word, so that He may help you use your talents to “promote a culture of mercy based on the rediscovery of encounter with others, a culture in which no one looks at another with indifference or turns away from the suffering of our brothers and sisters” (Apostolic Letter *Misericordia et misera*, n.20).

In the year just ending, the 500th anniversary of the Reformation was commemorated. The Pope also asks the Holy Spirit to help you, young Protestants, Catholics and Orthodox, to rejoice and be enriched by the diversity of the gifts given to all Christ’s disciples, to show that the joy of the Gospel unites us beyond all the wounds of our

divisions. And he encourages you not to be afraid to walk the paths of brotherhood, so that your meeting in Basel will make visible the joyous communion that springs from the source of the overflowing heart of the Lord.

By entrusting yourself to the Lord so that you can sing with the Virgin Mary the wonders of His love, which is the source of joy, the Holy Father gives you his heartfelt blessing to you, young people participating in this meeting, to the Frères de Taizé, and to all the people of Switzerland, France and Germany who welcome you.

Cardinal Pietro Parolin
Secretary of State of His Holiness
