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# Papal Message Congratulates Orthodox Marking Easter

## Calls to a Common Witness of the Resurrection

VATICAN CITY, APRIL 18, 2012 ([Zenit.org](http://www.zenit.org)).- A common witness to Christ can reinforce the faith of all Christians and renew their hope, especially where they are victims of violence, says Benedict XVI.

These were sentiments expressed in a message sent on behalf of the Pope by the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, to the heads of the Orthodox and Eastern Churches that follow the Julian calendar and celebrated Easter on Sunday, April 15.

The papal message expresses the hope that the proclamation of the Resurrection of Christ, “renewed by joint witness in truth and love” “might reinforce the faith of all Christians and renew their hope, especially in those parts of the world where they are victims of violence, and give peace and consolation to all those enduring suffering, sickness, injustice, hunger and poverty.”

In particular, the Pontiff recalled the words addressed by the angel to the women who went to the sepulcher: “Do not be afraid; for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. He is not here; for he has risen, as he said. Come, see the place where he lay” (Matthew 28:5-6).

“The proclamation of the Resurrection of Jesus shows that the last word in human existence is not death but life, and thus reveals the fullness of the love of God,” said the Holy Father.

For Pope Benedict XVI, unity is essential for witness. “Today Christians are called to spread this message of hope to the men and women of our time” and “this proclamation will resound with greater force when we can proclaim it together.”

“In fact, the forces to promote Christian unity are based primarily on the words of the prayer that Jesus addressed to the Father: ‘that they may all be one (...) so that the world may believe that thou hast sent me’ (John 17:21).”

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