

YEAR XXXI N 09/10 SEPTEMBER OCTOBER 2014

MARIAPOLI

Newsletter of the Focolare Movement

PA/C/RM/33/2012 | taxe perçue | tassa riscossa Roma

Poste Italiane S.p.A. | Spedizione in abbonamento postale D.L. 353/2003 (conv. in L. 27/02/2004 n.46) art. 1, comma 1, DCB Roma

Assembly 2014

**A month of
communion**

**Interview
with Emmaus**

New generations

Many occasions
to form the
«universal being»

Ecclesial world

The winning
«strategy»
of relationships

With these two excerpts taken from the Italian book *Gesù Eucaristia (Jesus in the Eucharist)*, edited by Fabio Ciardi and newly published by Città Nuova, let's leave it to Chiara to introduce to us this «mystery of communion», the point of our spirituality that will accompany us this year

With what daring can I speak about you

For me to talk about you, Jesus in the Eucharist, is really quite daring and presumptuous. For you are present in all the churches of the world, listening to the intimate secrets, the hidden problems, and the sighs of millions of people, seeing the tears of joy in the conversions that you alone know about. You are the heart of all hearts, the heart



of your faith has as much to do with unity as the Eucharist.

The Eucharist opens up unity and reveals its essence. In fact, it is through the Eucharist that a person's unity with God is completely realized, as well as that of the people among themselves, and with the whole of the cosmos with its Creator¹.

Jesus when I set out to say something about you in the Eucharist, I think that my heart was almost on fire. I suddenly realized what I was about to do: to say something about you in four meager conversations, while what I really desired would have been to build you a cathedral.

Now I feel that the end result is nothing more, perhaps, than a little wooden altar. I am not capable of speaking about you. You are too great.

I read once that if the Church did not have the Eucharist, it would not have the strength to rise up towards God. For this reason the Eucharist is considered the heart of the Church.

And so forgive my daring. But since you are a master of the art of drawing great things out of weakness, I offer you these pages as a tiny gift of love for your infinite gift of love. Use them so that others may know you a little better and understand how, with the strength they receive from you, they can unleash a Christian revolution in the world².

of the Church. We would prefer not to disturb the silence befitting such a sublime and breathtaking love, except that our own love, eager to overcome every fear, desires to go beyond the veils of the white host and the wine in the golden chalice.

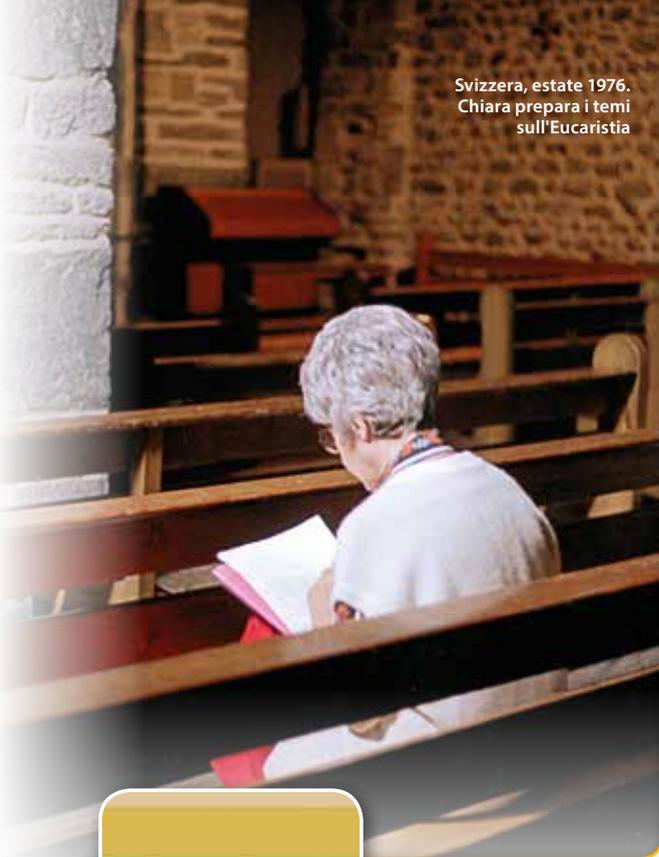
Forgive our boldness! For love wants to know better in order to love better and we do not want to conclude our journey on earth before having discovered at least a little who You are.

Moreover, since we are Christians, and within our mother the Church we live and spread the ideal of unity, we have to talk about the Eucharist, for none of the mysteries of

1 From a conversation dated October 4, 1976 in C. Lubich, *Gesù Eucaristia*, edited by Fabio Ciardi, Città Nuova, Rome 2014, p. 40-41.

2 From a conversation dated October 12, 1976; in C. Lubich, cit. p.41

Svizzera, estate 1976.
Chiara prepara i temi
sull'Eucaristia



The present anthology allows us to grasp the journey taken by Chiara in a process that will develop over time. She bears witness – through concrete and living experiences, pages of her diary and excerpts of conversations that have never been published before, published writings that often are not well-known – the gradual discovery of the presence of Jesus in the Eucharist in her life and in that of her Movement. «You entered into my life – we hear her affirm – more than the air in my lungs, more than the blood in my veins». These are intimate thoughts, that express the profound personal relationship that Chiara was able to establish throughout her life with Jesus in the Eucharist, a living presence, whom she confided in as if to a person who is her closest, most intimate and best friend.

Eli Folonari, a focolarina who has lived with her for more than fifty years, shared that even the house where Chiara lived for the last forty years of her life seemed to facilitate her relationship with Jesus in the Eucharist: «In her diary of February 14, 1971, she wrote that while she was moving into the new house, she wrote: "Thank you, my God, for this little house which, through the Movement, you have given me. Here, also physically, living within it, going round and round, I am always near you; and this makes it easier for me to think about you ... You give me the grace of an intimacy with you". ... Even during her final illness her relationship with Jesus in the Eucharist never diminished. When it was already difficult for her to move around at home, even with dextrose attached to her arm, she would pass near the chapel and look through the door and simply say: "Hello Jesus". Her journey concluded with Jesus in the Eucharist. On the day that she came home from the hospital, a Mass was celebrated in her room, but she was not able to receive Communion because in that moment she was unable to swallow. We had to give it to her later, by then it was just a few hours before she died, a true "viaticum", food for her journey towards Heaven»¹.

That familiar «Hello Jesus» is the final sign of a personal relationship that produced many unexpected fruits, capable of generating a new community and seeds of resurrection in history. ...

Chiara's experience, before being a teaching, is therefore a profound, personal experience, that she was able to share; a narration that has become «mystagogy», a discrete proposal that convinces, that is able to involve the reader in the very same experience.

From the introduction of the book *Gesù Eucarestia*, edited by Fabio Ciardi, ed. Città Nuova, Rome, July 2014

¹ Interview with the administrator, April 2014

Assembly 2014

A month of communion

At the conclusion of the event that gathered together at Castel Gandolfo almost 500 representatives of the Movement in the world, we asked Emmaus for an evaluation of the experience made and what were the prospects that emerged



28 september. Emmaus and Jesús in the link-up with the Zones of the world at the conclusion of the Assembly

QWhat was the most significant experience that the Assembly will leave as a gift to the Opera?

«I think that it is precisely the experience of having worked and made decisions in unity, rather, of having built moment by moment, day by day, a relationship of such listening, of reciprocal respect, of trust, that allowed us to truly say whatever thoughts passed through our mind, whatever opinion whether favorable or contrary to a certain thing, but with that detachment and with that love which then allowed all of us to understand where the compass of the Assembly itself must be pointing, and what the Will of God was in that moment. Therefore also the decisions made or the phrase that was said were really a fruit of this communion.

And this I think, is the experience that we made in the Assembly, but which was then transmitted to the Opera in the world through our means of communication, and so it is something that is by now the patrimony of the Opera».

What was the most difficult moment and the moment which gave you the most joy?

«If I think of myself personally, the difficult moment was the night after the elections, because I felt that the yes that I had said, and which I said with all my heart, committed me to a task which in that moment, that night, seemed to be greater than all my possibilities.

I always thought that the second mandate would be more difficult than the first, logically because of my age, but also because of the challenges that the world presents us which are always more difficult. But that night I felt that it was something that I had to face, and I couldn't sleep without facing it at once.



What gave me peace was the thought that in any case there is God who grants his grace according to the task one has been entrusted with, and so there will surely be God's help. And then I felt that this time too, in my yes there is the yes of the whole Opera who was with me to support this new adventure that was beginning. This was the difficult moment for me personally.

If I think of the Assembly altogether, another difficult moment I think was towards the end of the election of the men and women advisers. At a certain point I felt that certain ways of reasoning, ideas or contradictions were starting to circulate among the participants of the Assembly that to me didn't seem to be coming from love, from the inspiration of God, but from human considerations, from the desire to affirm one person or another, from the particular attention to the human susceptibility of someone. And so it seemed to me that the Assembly was in danger: the danger of allowing the seed of division to infiltrate it. I felt that the only one who could fight against this danger was the Madonna, who once again was the one who had to crush these serpents and that the only thing to do was to pray, and so I prayed to her to be the one to take care of it. And in fact, the situation was happily resolved, to the joy of everyone, even if for someone it may have meant overcoming a difficult moment».

What do you think about the unanimous participation that accompanied the preparation and the carrying out of the Assembly?

«I think that a new way of doing things has been initiated, starting with the prepara-



tion, since we wanted all the members to be kept updated on the topics that were to be discussed in the Assembly and so that they could participate and even propose the topics. And we saw to it that this unanimous participation would reach the participants of the Assembly in all its entirety; certainly prepared, summarized in some way by the preparatory Commission that had worked for a year on these topics, but without omitting anything of what was sent to them.

In fact aside from the document which was then worked on during the Assembly, everything that arrived from the Zones all over the world is at the disposition of the new Center of the Opera, of the new general Council, precisely so that what was produced by everyone is put in common and will be of help in building



the Opera today the way the people of Chiara would like it to be.

This style was inaugurated already during the preparation, which then proved to be a winner also in the Assembly – because everything that we did in those days was the fruit of communion – and I think that it will be something that will continue, precisely because this experience is not limited only to the Assembly,



26 september. The Assembly is received in an audience by Pope Francis



but through our means of communication it reached the entire world. We felt that it was not just a matter of updating, of knowing things, but it was a real participation in what we were living in the Assembly from one point of the earth to another, and that every decision was shared not just by 500 persons but with the whole family spread all over the world. Thus it guaranteed a safe path».

Emmaus, immediately after the elections you mentioned several times that everything is new. How is this "new" Emmaus?

«Maybe we will discover the novelty of this new period when it is over. Nevertheless I said that I profoundly feel that it will be this way, at least because the governing body that will accompany me is new: among the 32 people only eight of the previous group have been reconfirmed, therefore there is a great

novelty, it is a young group, more international. Therefore it is obvious that there is something new, it's not just felt within, but you can also see it externally.

But what I feel has changed is this presence of more young people from various parts of the world at the Center of the Opera which indicates a change in the Opera itself, namely it indicates that we don't have to wait any

longer for the "go signal", the indications from the Center, but that all over the world the Opera would like to be the protagonist, and she is the protagonist of her growth and development. This makes me very happy, it gives me great joy because it gives me the certainty that truly the programme for «Ut omnes» is the priority and that everyone is doing their best to reach it.

With regards to myself I feel that I have changed places. If before in the beginning it seemed as if I had to put myself at the forefront and give a guideline, to pull behind me



the whole Opera so as to continue to follow the Charism in the same way that Chiara had given it to us, to present it and to increase the unity among everyone, now it seems as if this task is being done by the Opera in its entirety. Naturally I too have to do something, but its no longer to put myself in the frontline, but to stay behind everyone so that they feel supported by this gaze, by someone who looks at them not so much to control them but to support, to encourage, to push them towards that path which all of us feel that we must take».

What kind of experience are you hoping that the new Center of the Opera will make?

«To begin with, an experience of a greater knowledge of the Opera, which logically



28 september. The greeting of Giancarlo Faletti and the previous Center of the Opera

will happen in time, staying together and discovering also the wealth of the work done by the general advisers and by the leaders of the Opera in the previous six years. Not only this: but also acquainting themselves with all the material produced by the Assembly that was handed over to the Center of the Opera.

And so first of all an experience of a more profound knowledge of the Opera.

Then an experience which can bring us ahead only all together. In the governing body each one must look to the unity of the whole Opera, to the progress of the whole Opera, not just the task which has been entrusted to them personally.

Finally, the experience of joy, of surprise in discovering what God does in the Opera, therefore to see, moment by moment, the progress of the Opera as a gift of the love of God. I think that these three things are important».

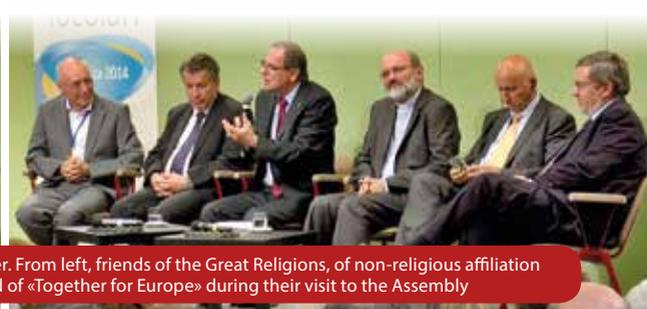
What are the first steps that you have in your heart to do with the Center of the Opera and the general Council??

«We must start with getting to know one another, to know each other profoundly. Meanwhile we have to be all together and this is not possible immediately because each one has to conclude something, to handover the work that they have been doing up to this moment. So a couple of months will pass until the Center of the Opera can begin to function in its entirety.

Nevertheless in these days we met three times, we made the latest necessary decisions such as that of choosing the names to present to the Assemblies of the women's Section and the men's Section for the elections of the persons in charge; to decide also for the Assemblies of the men and women Volunteers and of the priests. Then we made a bit of a program in the sense that we decided together to limit the trips outside the country, of everyone, including the President, precisely so that we could stay together, to build this profound relationship of unity among us, and to take an interest in and take special care of the relationship with



18 september. From left, friends of the Great Religions, of non-religious affiliation and of «Together for Europe» during their visit to the Assembly



the President and with the entire Center, with all of the Council with the various Centers of the Movement that are here in the Center of the Opera. This will take up our time, more or less for the entire year».

prepared by Aurora Nicosia and Gianna Sibelli

see the **SPECIAL ISSUE ASSEMBLY 2014** at
www.focolare.org/notiziariomariapoli



Il nuovo Centro dell'Opera

PRESIDENT Maria (Emmaus) Voce
COPRESIDENT Jesús Morán Cepedano

Aspects

CENTRAL DELEGATES (BLACK) Friederike Koller (Germany) e Ángel Bartol Gajate (Spain);
COMMUNION OF GOODS, ECONOMY AND WORK (RED) Geneviève Sanze (Central Africa Rep.) e Ruperto Battiston (Italy);
IRRADIATION AND APOSTOLATE (ORANGE) Maria da Gloria Silveira Duarte (Brazil) e Tim King (United Kingdom);
UNION WITH GOD AND PRAYER (YELLOW) Josiane (Pace) Nasr (Lebanon) e António Ventura de Sousa Borges (Portugal);
PHYSICAL LIFE AND NATURE (GREEN) Olga Maria Rodriguez Correa (Uruguay) e Dorival (Bianco) Spatti (Brazil);
CLOTHES AND HOUSES (BLUE) Clara (Vita) Zanolini (Italy) e Vit (Vitek) Valtr (Czech Republic);
WISDOM AND STUDIES (INDIGO) Margareta (Renata) Simon (Germany) e Francisco Antonio Canzani Cuello (Uruguay);
UNITY AND MEANS OF COMMUNICATION (VIOLET) Maria Cecilia Capuzzi (Argentina) e Paolo Loriga (Italy);

Grandi zone

ITALY Margaret Karram (Holy Land) e Marc St-Hilaire (Canada);
EUROPE Donna Kempf (USA) e Severin Schmid (Switzerland);
MIDDLE EAST Olga Maria Rodriguez Correa (Uruguay) e Dorival (Bianco) Spatti (Brazil);
ASIA Antonella Liguori (Italy) e Roberto Catalano (Italy);
AFRICA Juanita Majury (Ireland) e Joseph Assouad (Lebanon);
NORTH AMERICA Vida Rus (Slovenia) e Raymond (Ray) Asprer (Filippine)
LATIN AMERICA Maria Gabriela de Melo (Portugal) e Augusto Parody Reyes (Spain)
OCEANIA Siu-Wai Vanessa (Vania) Cheng (China) e Andrew Camilleri (Malta)

Central Delegates for the sections

MEN AND WOMEN FOCOLARINI Agnes Van Zeeland (Holland) e Flávio Luiz Roveré de Oliveira (Brazil)

Segretari Gloria Campagnaro (Italy) e Robert Chadourne (France)

Men and Women Focolarini

Due squadre internazionali

The Assemblies of the two sections elected the central delegates and their respective councils. The topics that were discussed were very important

After three weeks of work the General Assembly gave way to the Assembly of the women focolarine and men focolarini with respectively 312 and 270 among participants and invited guests. It began with a morning dedicated to a retreat, and then the two Assemblies met together for a brief evaluation and updating given by Serenella Silvi and Hans Jurt (outgoing central delegates) on the life of the focolares and on the work that has been started with regards to the modifications to the respective regulations.



Agnes Van Zeeland, Flávio Roveré

The elections of the central delegates of the two sections and their respective councils was scheduled on the fourth day. For the women focolarine they chose Agnes Van Zeeland, 57 years old, Dutch, who is presently the Zone delegate of Holland and the Nordic countries. The men focolarini chose Flávio Luiz Roveré de Oliveira, 51 years old, Brazilian, Zone delegate of the Work of Mary in Mariapolis Piero, Kenya. Both of them can speak four languages.

In the first afternoon of that day, in the presence of Emmaus and Jesús and of the other councilors, the two newly elected, Agnes and Flávio, accepted the task with both of them underlining their desire to deepen also the unity between the two Centers.

Emmaus, upon receiving their acceptance, commented: « The Eternal Father prepares surprises. This is one of the surprises of this Assembly: we have two persons who will be responsible for the men and women sections of the Focolarini. One hails from northern Europe while the other is from the southern part of world (Brazil) who has some African experience. This is a very good thing, because it is an opening, a breather for all the men and women Focolarini in the world. It's a very positive sign ».

Thus the new Center of the Work of Mary has been completed because also the two central delegates of the sections are part of it.

Then the elections for the councilors followed (see those who were elected in the box).

prepared by the editorial board

The new councilors

(in alphabetical order)

Women Focolarine

Joana d'Arc Costa, Brazil

Pilar Fernandez del Moral Dominguez, Spain

Irma del Valle Sosa, Argentina

Arlete (Tecris) Madeira Noronha, Macau

Giovanna (Virgo) Ogliengo, Italy

Maria Ricci, Italy

Teresa Rychwalska, Poland

Joan Wanjira, Kenya

Married Focolarina

Adriana Lamagna Rodolico, Italy

Men Focolarini

Roberto Almada, Argentina

Francesco Chatel, Italy

José Mario Dias Feio, Brazil

Alberto Kim, Korea

Magnus Mentzel, Germany

Carlos Saura, Spain

Raphaël Takougang, Cameroun

Mario Tancredi, Italy

Married Focolarino

Salvatore Lamagna, Italy



Egitto



Senegal

Summer Mariapolises «Citizens» of a different world

Privileged occasions for building relationships, finding hope once more, meeting God

Looking at the messages received from the Mariapolises that were held in many parts of the planet, one has the impression that also this year, Mary has formed its citizens. A common DNA brought about life changes, gave back the strength to live for a more united world, to carry out immediate gestures of reconciliation and of peace. God worked in hearts; many, who had lost hope – just like Veronika of Estonia – «found once again the meaning of life». A young religious man spoke of «the beautiful and sweet perfume of the spirituality of Chiara», which was borne witness to by the experiences shared.

«A moment that has been awaited throughout the whole year – they wrote from Moscow – a place where one feels free also to make mistakes because one is sure of being loved. The Mariapolis is becoming more and more ours, "Russian", an expression of the people and the Churches that are within the territory».

Many Bishops who shared this experience, encouraged and highlighted the agreement of the charism of unity with the teachings of Pope Francis, underlining the priority for dialogue.

Varied and very different in the number of participants – from 30 in the Republic of Moldova to the hundreds in the Countries wherein the

Movement has been present for a long time – style of the programme, venues, generations. But the same atmosphere of the family, the same fruits, the same transforming action of the Gospel lived: «One cannot remain just a spectator of fraternity» was the motto of the Mariapolis of Brittany, in France.

The new generations played a key role everywhere. In Tocancipá, in Colombia, the story of the Ideal, shared by the Gen in a creative way, brought everyone to «those marvelous "early" and yet present times». In Rosario, in Argentina, because the programme was conducted by the youth, we were able to remain with the people, without running around, without any worries.

Local communities as the protagonists

The local communities, many of them for the first time, took the «risk» of preparing the Mariapolis by themselves, as a gift for their area.

Just like in Goiânia, 200 kilometers from Brasilia. Or in San Salvador, where the words of Emmaus to the community: «I count on you as protagonists in this new phase of the Movement» gave them wings to fly. The programme that they prepared was «new, dynamic, motivating and formative».

In Krasnojarsk they celebrated the tenth anniversary of the Mariapolis in Siberia, with the Orthodox, Protestants, Baptists and Catholics.

«I saw that the people had grown and become responsible. From three years ago when the focolare center was closed, everything has gone ahead... the heart remained and life continued» - Fr. Melichar, priest Volunteer of the Movement who was present in the previous Mariapolises, shared with us.

In Rumania more than one Mariapolis was held. From Cluj: «Having a Mariapolis for a more circumscribed region, allowed many, who before remained on the sidelines, to express themselves as excellent players. We gained a new team! The Work of Mary is alive and is growing. I understood then why the focolarini just remain in the background: so as to be totally in God and to bring His presence of love to each one. It is not so much the work that they do but their life, their Trinitarian relationships radiate ».



In Spain, in the Mariapolis of Granada, everything was prepared up to the smallest details by the local community, like the evening of welcome wherein they offered typical products for all the 900 participants to taste. Both civil and religious institutions collaborated, and they all felt themselves protagonists and involved in the atmosphere that they experienced.

The «first time»

From Tewatte (Sri Lanka) a Gen girl posted on Facebook: «Built out of nothing else but smiling faces, warm hearts and small acts of

love and of friendship, it was not only the first meeting of its kind in this fascinating Country, but it also revealed the love, the generosity and the warmth that is hidden in the hearts of its inhabitants. It was like reliving the early times. Many opened their homes for the meetings so as to keep the flame alive in the newly formed community». To reinforce the community, members from India came together with Elena Camilleri, focolarina of the Roman Mariapolis.

Also on another island, Corsica, «the dream of having a Mariapolis became a reality», wrote the small group of the community, animated by Jehanne. At the end of June, near Ajaccio, they had the joy «of seeing a nice group of Corsicans arriving, very much involved and interested in deepening this spirituality that is liberating».

The first Mariapolis was also held in Senegal, in Zinguinchoir, with the presence of men and women focolarini from the neighbouring countries. Sixty people came together from Burkina Faso, Guinea Bissau and Mali; among the many youth, a Muslim girl. «In spite of our limitations and meagre means, we saw how the grace of the Ideal goes ahead and transforms the people», they commented.

In the «hotspots»

The Mariapolises held in the frontiers and in territories where peace is a conquest that is not taken for granted were significant. (see www.focolare.org/notiziariomariapoli/dalla-terra-santa2/ Mariapolis of Nazareth).

In the Middle East, in a climate of war and vengeance, the peace that was built moment by moment reconciled hearts. So too among the participants in Algeria, the majority of them



Muslims, and in Amman in Jordan where some participants also came from Iraq and Syria.

Two Mariapolises in Lebanon. In the North a third of the participants came from Syria, with a numerous group from Aleppo. A visit to the monastery of S. Antonio Kozhaya, recalled the unshakable faith of the Fathers of the Church, so as to save the Christians during the first persecutions with a strong supernatural thrust.

A couple from Damascus who lost both their sons during the war, said: «You have given us back the meaning of life, even in the midst of our immense suffering». At Ain Ebel, in the southernmost

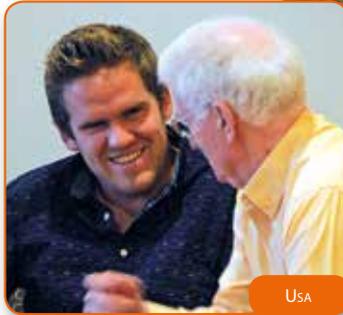
part of Lebanon, a few kilometers from the border with the Holy Land where the winds of war and insecurity are always present, they experienced a «travelling» Mariapolis. Living with some families, sharing in their daily life. «Your presence has changed the face of the village» commented the people of that place.

In Egypt, a Mariapolis of the «early times» in the midst of the desert, with temperatures reaching 43-44 degrees, the lack of water and extremely long trips. Among the more than 370 Mariapolites, there were also Ayman and Dina, our Muslim friends.

In Yogyakarta all the major islands of Indonesia were represented: numerous students from Papua, Flores, Kalimantan, Sumatra, Sulawesi, Maluku and Java, participants also came from Malaysia and Singapore, with



Libano



USA

Muslims, Sikhs, Christians of various Churches, priests, religious and seminarians. A youth from East Timor found himself beside the ex-governor who, during the war for the independence of his Country, represented the oppressor. He understood that he had to go beyond the hatred he felt and to forgive. In getting to know each other, a breach was opened that led to mutual respect, for a new beginning of reconciliation.

In Myanmar, with long trips sometimes even on foot, they arrived in two hundred in the mountains of the East with some Christian representatives of different Churches and some Buddhists, aside from the Catholics.

In Ukraine, because of the continuous disorder they decided to postpone the Mariapolis. To their surprise, they received the unexpected news that in the mountains in the western part of the Country, the community was able to hold the Mariapolis: «They were days full of light, we felt free from the world, from the war. We want to incarnate that "on earth as it is in Heaven"

in our community, in our Country, wherein brothers and sisters from one part to the other of Ukraine suffer together. We fully trust in the love of God, who will protect our Ukrainian people».



Kazakistan

So as to grow together

In many places the Mariapolis is an occasion of communion with Movements, associations, communities.

In Colombia, it was held at Villa di Leyva – a Citadel founded by one of our Carmelite religious, which is named «City of God» – and the communion lived with another charism enriched everyone.

A Mariapolis entitled «Love begins with one step» in Siderno, in Calabria, to give or give back hope that things can change even where the n'drangheta (Mafia) works unopposed. The relationship with the Youth Committee O'Strakon of Gioiosa Ionica and the Association of Don Milani was immediate and sincere. They identified new activities to increase fraternity in the city and to move on from individual actions to a collective activity in the local communities.

In the Southeastern part of Rumania there was a profound communion among the Orthodox and the Catholics. The small and young communities spread throughout the region met together. A big gift was the dialogue with three Orthodox priests and eight lay people belonging to an Orthodox parish. The words of Fr. Mihai Popovici were significant: «We are those who begin to sew again that original bond for which Jesus prayed and for which he encouraged us to pray. We form the new generations of this Church with the aspiration to unity».

In Sweden, a special moment was the visit to the community of Bjärka-Säby whose founder Peter Halldorf, a Pentecostal, participates in «Together for Europe».

Many Mariapolises were held during the period of the Soccer World Cup. From Santo Domingo: «We wanted to transform the meeting into a "World Cup of fraternity": we organized ourselves into "delegations", each one

with their "captain", with moments for "warming-up" and of "training". We never gave out a yellow card! We concluded with the awarding ceremony for all the "players"».

«There is one thing that we would like to try to express, but it is more of an intuition rather than a vision – they wrote to us from the vacation Mariapolis of the Marche region. We experienced "the nuptial relationship between the community and the focolare". The men and women focolarini including the married ones were in service, hidden but active with all their heart in protecting the flame of reciprocal love in each small group, workshop, etc. It is love that makes everyone free to be themselves and



Indonesia

to bring out, for the others, one's own talents ... The men and women core members gave themselves with all their strength. Maybe it was that "being protagonists" that is expressed naturally when one is supported and encouraged. Maybe it is that passage from the Fable that blossomed along "Foco" path when: "All the stars loved each other, praising the respective beauty of one another and they were not jealous of the beauty of the other". Maybe this is what will make the firmament spill over the earth, made up of all the people of the Movement, enthusiastic and luminous, to bring the kingdom of God "outside" ...».

prepared by Gianna Sibelli

With the gen4 boys and girls «Discovering» the Eucharist

In the second half of June the Mariapolis Center of Castel Gandolfo welcomed first the gen4 girls and then the gen4 boys coming from the various European Countries with some representatives from the continents. There were 850 participants in all

On this occasion we presented the theme of the new Ideal year: the Eucharist. We found ourselves in faced with many questions: how can we let the children experience the presence of God in the Eucharist, when many of them are not used to praying or even to enter a Church? The films of fantasy today, for which a lot of money and talents are spent, often introduce them to a world of magic. We instead have very few resources, so what can we do? It was a great gift to experience once again that Jesus in the midst is our teacher and that with Him images, music and games acquire an extraordinary effect.

Here are some guidelines that came out from the communion among the collaborators of the Gen4 Centers:

- as gen4 assistants we must auto-involve ourselves totally and to be models, of charity and of prayer;
- the Mass must be enriched with songs, skits or films to illustrate the Gospel, and the priest must be close to the children through experiences. It must be an encounter

with Jesus where they can offer Him their acts of love;

- the programme must be all life, with many occasions to put reciprocal love into practice, in such a way that Jesus in the midst can speak to their and our hearts;
- we already prepared the answers and the experiences of Chiara on this topic, and with a group of gen4 we dubbed the introduction enriched with experiences and illustrations that will become the formation material for the whole year;
- the Eucharist is a gift that may be understood better if it is inserted within the history of salvation: the gen4 girls got to know this fantastic story through a musical, that began with the Big Bang and ended with the resurrection of the dead;
- for the gen4 boys we prepared an experiential journey with many creative activities and a game park through which they could answer in many ways to this great gift.





«Jesus, I love you very much.
How beautiful it is to see you,
I am so happy to be with you,
it is so beautiful to be with you».

With the contribution of many assistants and many focolarine, focolarini and gen of the Roman Mariapolis, we went to work: taping songs, writing scripts for the musical, designing, preparing a big game: «Let's give life to our city» that presented many occasions to love concretely (there was the gym, the restaurant, the theatre, the boutique, the necklace factory ...).

There were many questions for Emmaus, some of them were «hot topics». «Were you happy with what you did in these years? And were you happy with what er gen4 did? Dear Emmaus, how can I overcome my fears?».

A trinitarian relationship also with children?

Now we would like to focus on an extraordinary challenge, especially for us adults, that is, to go out of the classic image of how an animator, a group leader, parent or catechist should

Un dono grandissimo è stata la presenza di 4 gruppi dei continenti extraeuropei: Giappone, Brasile, USA, Africa (Douala), possibile per la comunione dei beni di tutte le gen4 del mondo, anche di chi non è potuto venire.



be. Chiara opened wide our horizons when she spoke of a trinitarian relationship that can be realized also with the gen4 boys and girls. Between a child and an adult, they could be many years and many centimeters apart, but above all they have different ways of perceiving reality! Here are some testimonies of the men and women assistants belonging to various branches and movements of the Opera on how to be a gift for one another:



«As a focolarino I was always attracted to the words of Jesus "if you do not convert yourselves and do not become like little children, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven", but I think that I have not really understood them completely. I felt something totally new: I didn't have to do something for the gen4 or to teach them how to love, not this, but I had to discover together with them, to conquer others together with them, to play a game together with them, in short, to meet Love and to live with them these "little flowers". This made me rediscover my vocation!».

A focolarina explained: «In the relationship of the gen4 girls with Jesus one could see the spontaneity, purity, depth, sacredness and much joy... these realities form us a lot within. I feel that one of the secrets of the gen4 girls is that they know how to start again immediately».

«"Did you also make an act of love?», Giovanni asked me. I didn't think that I too had to do it – a Volunteer admitted. At first I thought that everything was really small, but then I discovered how each act of love was worth its



These two congresses were a laboratory together with the gen4 boys and girls, where we experienced and developed the formation material for the gen4 for the coming year, which you will find in the gen4 website (www.gen4.focolare.it), with the password of your gen4 assistants.

weight in gold to build this Congress together with the children. This is what really happened: there were no longer the adults and the children, we were all equal just as Chiara once said: "The soul has no age, it is always a Jesus to Jesus encounter".

«To tell you the truth handicrafts workshop wasn't really appealing to me and so I thought that it would be a good time to answer to my emails. At a certain point I saw some gen4 boys who were distracted and so I started to work together with them. I became enthusiastic in a way that I have not felt for years, I almost lost myself in what I was doing. Stupendous things came out and the most beautiful thing was that I felt that Jesus in the midst overwhelmed us».

«Living with the gen4 is the best professional training one can have! I came to the Congress with my head smoking, full of the complex things that I had to do as a manager of a multinational company. Then I plunged myself into the race of living the Gospel to the letter. After two days, thinking for a moment

about my work, I saw that many things became simpler, I acquired a clarity that I didn't have before which showed me how to go ahead. The gen4 boys made me rediscover that I must immerse myself in God and allow myself to be guided by Him».

A gen2 shared: «I started my journey in the movement looking at the world with the eyes of a gen4. I understood much of that which today I live for. It is always a great joy to listen to the experience of a gen4 girl who shares how she tries to live the same Ideal, which to me seems impossible to live in that moment, and it gave me new hope that I can make it and it brought a smile to my face».

«During a workshop Ludovico was modeling a pre-cut cat but gradually it was losing its shape. I wanted to scold him, but I remembered that my mother always showed an attitude of



With the gen4 girls of Douala and a group from Italy we went to Slovenia after the Congress where 120 children from various Countries nearby were waiting for us at the Mariapolis Center of Planina: it was a very strong experience of getting to know one another, even if we were speaking six different languages! Together we learned a Brazilian, an African and a Slovenian dance.



great gentleness in front of my childish antics. Can't you see – Ludovico explained to me – I made the Madonna! Now I could see it too and we rejoiced together. A few days later he came and showed me a cross made from a single branch that he found in the forest and which he had fixed up a little. I felt as if this gen4 took me by the hand and brought me straight to Jesus».

embracing the whole world. In fact, the love of children brings us back to the universal love of God for us: they love a mayor just as they love a beggar».

In short, we experienced, just as someone responsible for a focolare said, that:

«The gen4 are not the future of the Opera but they are already Opera. Rather, we must take them as our models and to become the future of the Opera by going back to being children of the Gospel».

the Gen4 Centers

What effect does art have on children, why does it touch their souls? Children easily understand and remember «contents» because art involves almost all the areas of intelligence: verbal, visual, spatial, theatrical, rhythmic, interpersonal and socio-cultural. This facilitates concentration and memory of the themes shared.



«A father added: according to me the workshops gave to the gen4 great values such as the care that God has for us, the beauty of nature, the respect for the things of the others and civic life in society. But the strongest impact was to discover and live them together, in an experience where each one enriches the other».

«Once in awhile a gen4 boy disappeared during the break and then would come back very happy. I asked him, where he went. His answer was: I went to the kitchen to help out! At this point I remembered how as a child, one day I too helped my mother in the kitchen, more than I would usually do. At a certain point a light invaded my soul, a great warmth that made me sing: I want to love everyone always. That moment had remained in my soul as if it were only yesterday. It was God who made me discover the power of love that is capable of



We would like to propose as a project for the coming year to repeat these congresses in some way, adapting them to the situation of the place, of the local communities.

The Young for unity

Construction site «World Man»

During the summer a «construction site» was put up in Argentina that involved more than 500 teenagers of many nationalities where they could build and experience the formula for a new kind of person: «the world-man»

World-Man The idea comes from Chiara. In the Supercongresso gen3 of 1997 she told us that *«the model for the future generations is the person of unity, the world-man. A person - that is - who is able to welcome in his or her heart the treasures that the others from the various continents give and who is also able to share his or her treasures to all the others».*

One city is not enough This is the manifesto of the third generation in whom Chiara has traced the outlines of the plan of action needed to conquer a city to the love of God. The natural outlet of the project *«Let us COLOR the city»*, is the way indicated by her at the end of that writing of hers: *«Look faraway, to the country of all, to the world».*

Do not remain at a standstill The first path, therefore, is to reach places that are different from our city, because it is one thing to hear about faraway places, the diversity of cultures, treasures and challenges to give and receive,

and completely another thing to live and experience the «golden rule», until people who were faraway before become our brothers, peoples who were once enemies become friends, unknown lands become our homeland... until we all become «world-man».



Heart and multiplying effect The central event was held in Latin America Latina with 530 teenagers from Argentina, Brazil, France, Austria, Switzerland, Ireland, United States, Australia, Malta, New Zealand, Korea, Bolivia, Chile, Mexico, Colombia, Paraguay, Uruguay, Costa Rica, Italy, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Ecuador... 530 were present for the first phase held at the Mariapoli Lia, to which several hundred teens were added who par-

ticipated in the second phase in the 18 venues spread throughout Central and South America, as they worked in one or more continuing social projects of the Opera, and many others who animated around ten World-Man "construction sites" that were held in the months of July and August 2014. International: in Mexico, Croatia, Lithuania...; inter-regional: in Recife, S.Paolo, in Liguria, in Sicily..., and also inter-city. All local but with a global flavour.

Who is the World-Man? We have experienced in the first phase that: he/she is a person who shares, listens, engages in dialogue, forgives; a brother or sister who overcomes with love the barriers that are built due to diversity of culture, language, history of peoples; he/she is not satisfied with receiving talents and treasures from the others and to offer his or her own in return, but is someone who creates bonds and knows how to activate them with love, putting them at the service of others, whose smallest act allows him to breathe deeply because he aims high, he looks far and wide at the whole world. We understood all of these through the themes presented by the various experts on the influence of the charism penetrating the different fields (inundations), through dialogue and in the communion among the various groups, but above all through the many occasions we lived in our day to day life, in the concrete love of the inhabitants of the Little town, from the gen2, the families, our animators.

«Non riesco a perdonare la nazione che è ora in guerra con la mia, troppe persone innocenti sono morte, ma se un giorno riuscirò a farlo è per l'amore reciproco che ho vissuto qui».

«I cannot forgive the nation that is now at war with mine, too many innocent people have died, but if one day I will be able to do it it will be because of the reciprocal love that I have lived here».

«It was a unique, unforgettable experi-

ence. We really became brothers of Paraguay, Brazil, Italy, Ireland... This filled us with great joy, energy and above all we committed ourselves: we are the builders of this new world, and by starting from small concrete actions we will be able to do it».

Together Sub-zones and local communities, people of all ages, vocations, Little towns: one single family!

This is what we experienced even more during the second phase when, divided into different smaller groups, we were able to reach Paraguay, Bolivia, Brazil, Mexico... Waiting for us there were the Young for unity of that place with the whole community of the Opera. Homes were opened, new families, mobilization of the city's institutions, associations... an incredible network of relationships that allowed an indefinite number of teens and others, to start with this experience that is totally renewed.

«I was very much impressed by the intense preparation of the community, which began months ago. The generosity and the joy of everyone was truly a beautiful welcome. Our departure from Mendoza was really impressive: the whole community, some on foot, others by car, followed our bus with much emotion and songs of gratitude. I saw the people of Chiara, people who are so different, but united in Him, who had shared an experience of God that made us one single family in just a few days».

«The welcome that we Irish received in Paraguay will remain fixed in me. Everyone opened their hearts and their homes. The words that I will remember always are: "My home is your





home" because the family who hosted me wanted me to feel at home because my real home was far away. I learned how to try new things and I feel that this has helped me to embrace the culture of other peoples, and to be more open, to get to know the world».

Be involved in everything In every place we entered into the wounds of our society. We met Jesus who was poor, marginalized, sick, alone, orphan ... but also friend and brother.

«The most beautiful memory of this trip was the visit to the slums and the orphanage. This experience opened my eyes, in the "developed" world we have so many things, instead here, even if they don't have anything, they are happy. We instead always complain about useless things».

«In all the palces we visited I found hope. A hope that inspires you to value all that you have, just like the children in the orphanage, who appreciated each other's presence. If I will be able to do this thing which inflames me: I will be on the frontlines of unity!»

Who loves sees *«Up to a week before my departure, I asked myself if I would truly find God in the experience in Argentina. Then we all met in the hall, seated on the floor around a large sheet that represented the world. A representative from each continent stood up and recited a prayer. Then he or she put a candle on her continent ... until the whole world was illuminated. We stood up and hand in hand – in more than 500 – we recited the Our Father each one in his or her own*

language. There, in that moment, I had the certainty that God was with us».

«The week I spent in O'Higgins helped me to renew my faith in God and it made me see how I can really love everyone. This life in the Mariapolis Lia really changed me. Now I will try to love more».

«I came here with many doubts about my faith, but the unconditional love that I experienced here was always present in the welcome, the spontaneity, in the simplicity of the relationships, that I said to myself: the love of God must be like this also for me. It must be unconditional».

Numbers and balance sheets How many teens were involved? How many supported the project? Up to where did our action reach? We don't know how to answer these questions: numbers, commitments, fruits and hearts renewed, only God will know them.

«I understood that everything we do must transform society. A united world is built one person at a time, but this doesn't mean only to work day by day to weave relationships, but also to have that push of going out and building, person by person, project after project, a machine for unity».

Future - present Returning home, each one to his or her own reality as «world» boys and girls, we passed on to the third phase, seeing how link-ups have started spontaneously among the communities that welcomed these youth and those that had sent these youth, to work on joint projects. The race towards the next «Run4unity» on May 3, 2015 has already begun!

prepared by the Center of the Young for unity

Bishops in Trent

In line with Pope Francis

For the second time the summer meeting of Bishops was held in Cadine (Trent)



The programme was prepared to encourage a life of communion, with a balance of the different aspects: study, dialogue, fraternal exchange of experiences, rest, etc. This was how our meeting was planned which took place at the Mariapolis Center of Cadine (Trent) in the beginning of August. We were 52 Bishops from 25 nations, coming from all parts of the world, to live a moment of collegiality, or reciprocal listening. Some Bishops from the Middle East and Asia were not able to come, like Mons. Lazzaro You, bishop of Daejeon (South Korea), who was in the frontline for the visit of the

Pope in Korea on the occasion of the Asian Youth Day.

We wanted to be especially in tune with the thoughts of Pope Francis, with his invitation to encounter the social and existential outskirts of humanity. It was a meeting of reflection and sharing on the present day challenges of the Church, according to the faces that these so-called challenges presented in the different continents.

A meditation on reciprocal love was the bridge between the theme of last year and that which we had to deepen this year: «The Eucharist mystery of communion». The theme of Chiara: «The passion for the Church» strengthened in us the love for the Church and the desire to inculturate our spirituality in the present day Church and in the world.

In the communion of soul the experiences were an enrichment for one another, so much so that the burdens were shared and the joys multiplied.



We went to the roots of the spirituality also thanks to some personalities such as Iginio Giordani and Bishop Klaus Hemmerle, presented by those who knew their thoughts profoundly, like university professors Alberto Lo Presti and Viviana De Marco, as well as Fr. Wilfried Hagemann.

We could not miss out on the tour of the native city of Chiara with its rich cultural and religious heritage and the natural beauty of the region. On that day we ended with a solemn Eucharistic concelebration presided by the three Cardinals who were present: JoãoBraz De Aviz, Miloslav Vlk and Ennio Antonelli. The Archbishop of Trent, Mons. Luigi Bressan, commented that it was the biggest gathering of Bishops in the city ever since the Council of Trent in the 16^o century.

Important moments included those spent with Emmaus and Giancarlo, starting with the theme of the year shared by Emmaus, which was followed by a profound communion of soul. The dialogue with the President and the Copresidente led to an update on the preparations for the General Assembly. We can say that it was a renewed discovery of the gift of the charism that accompanies and continues to support our life as Bishops.

What was highlighted was how the Eucharist has always been the «hidden motor» in the life of Chiara, and also of ours. Its power as the sacrament of unity is the root and nourishment of the Church, that produces the communion among brothers, forms the family of the children of God, makes us go out of our own individuality to go to the world and make ourselves one with everyone.

The desire to make this experience ours was sealed by the Pact of Unity during the mass

on the 4th of August concelebrated in the presence of Emmaus, Giancarlo and a vast representation of the local community of Trent.

In a letter written to Emmaus and Giancarlo, we shared with them our desire to be on the frontline in realizing the Church-communion and to develop the dialogues that are the specific characteristic of the Movement. We could not but remember how fifty years ago, on August 6, 1964, the encyclical *Ecclesiam Suam* was published, wherein Paolo VI presented the Church as dialogue. This document, which inspired Chiara in further articulating her dialogical perspective and which Pope Francis often refers to in the *Evangelii Gaudium*, pushed us even more to give our contribution for the realization of the goal indicated by Jesus: «that all may be one».

The last day, August 7, was dedicated to a topic that surprised many of us: «The meeting between Paolo VI and Chiara Lubich», presented with rich, never before published documents by Lucia Abignente, focolarina of the Chiara Lubich Center. What came to light was the providential role of this Pope in a crucial moment of the approval of the Work of Mary.

Various Bishops expressed the beauty of what they had lived: an experience of true fraternity, oriented towards being a Church that is «going out». «And since we come from all over the world, we will try to put ourselves "on air" together, so as to bring unity in the world». Some concrete commitments were also made such as that of reinforcing the formation of priests, religious and of the Bishops themselves, in cooperation with the Sophia University Institute, which is already very much appreciated in the ambit of academic institutions.

In such a context, we would like to recall the indications that Pope Francis had given to those who are committed to the service of the Church, in the Roman Curia: professionalism, service, sanctity.

*prepared by Francis
Xavier Kriengsak Kovithavanij*



Net-working, Church in relationships

Young priests and seminarians in Loppiano: an experience of life destined to multiply

With the Mass of the Queenship of Mary held at the Theotokos, animated by songs from different nations, rites, Christian denominations, the meeting «Net-working – Church in relationships» was concluded. It had gathered together, from August 19 to 22, 268 young priests, seminarians and young men who are orienting themselves towards the priesthood coming from 38 European countries and be-



yond. Among them were around ten married Greek-Catholics, three Evangelical pastors and an Orthodox. For many it was the first time for them to attend an international gathering of ours.

The final impressions of these four days in the Mariapolis Renata were significant:

«A spirituality that is new, beautiful, fresh, happy faces, Jesus in the midst!».

«A Church projected towards the future, unconventional, in tune with the times».

«The idea of communion does not just remain in the head but enters into one's life... Within this year in the seminary: I want to live as a priest of the world and not just of a small town».

Loppiano enveloped everyone in that unmistakable atmosphere of the Mariapolis. The



wonder was great in seeing a portion of the «living Church», a fraternity of universal dimensions. Being housed in the homes of the Little town allowed the participants to start the day «in the family», in groups, with breakfast and a spiritual thought as the meditation that served as the «compass» for the day. Every afternoon, like an «anchor» another luminous thought, taken from the writings of Chiara or Fr. Foresi, from the Scriptures, from Paul VI or Pope Francis, which focused on the central points of the Charism.

«Net-working – Church in relationships» was above all an experience of life, that was revealed day by day through specific topics: «Scenes of the world – pieces of fraternity», «Church in communion – for humanity», «Men of God – weavers of fraternal relationships». An introductory theme was presented for each of these topics accompanied by experiences. Then everyday there were nine workshops animated by experts of the Opera, which allowed everyone to be protagonists in facing together some «hot» topics, challenges and problems, that were enlightened in concrete ways. Every

afternoon, during an open forum, the fruits of the day were gathered.

Point of arrival and the final consignment was the strong testimony of Fr. Silvano Cola, presented through a video, on «Jesus Forsaken and the priestly world» dated April 30, 1982.

The impressions that the participants left us underlined the atmosphere that was joyous, friendly and authentic. They expressed the desire to become a net-worker there where they are, bringing this spirit in the parishes, seminaries, presbyters. They expressed the need to meet again, to share experiences, to remain «online» also through the internet. They requested for a similar meeting in the near future for the «others who need to experience these days spent together», to invite them so that they too may find «security, and hope». Some of them expressed the desire to commit themselves to the Movement, and also an interest in making the experience at the «Vinea mea» School for priests.



For many the meeting was a providential occasion to go back to Loppiano and for some also to the Opera.

«Networking» was «an unexpected miracle» that highlighted the new ways of offering the Ideal with freshness and immediacy suitable for this postmodern epoch and which gave us great hope. With the wish «that this meeting would inflame every diocese, every parish and bring the life of the Trinity in the world!».

*Fr. Alexander Duno, Fr. Tonino Gandolfo,
Fr. Hubertus Blaumeiser*

The Parish Movement and the Diocesan Movement

Youth and members

**The parish and the diocese
as a privileged place to live the Ideal
of unity at the service of the needs
of the communities in the most diverse
environments. In Benevento,
their first international meeting
held in the beginning of August
gathered together 200 youth
from different Countries**

It has already been many years that the youth members of the Parish and Diocesan Movements have been meeting in regular local appointments in order to build a stronger unity among them and to reinforce the commitment that makes them actively involved in the parishes and dioceses on all levels: catechism, youth pastoral work, preparations for Confirmation, etc.

In the parishes they take charge of many groups of children, teens and youth to whom they give the spirituality and with whom they do various concrete activities. They organize camps for different ages where they can go in depth and this leads to the revitalization of the life in the parish communities.

But there has never been a meeting together with the members of the two Movements, open to other Countries besides Italy. There was a felt need of the importance of such an encounter and so it was already in the programme for quite some time. But it was precisely Emmaus and Giancarlo who gave a new push to go ahead with this appointment. After the meeting we had with them in December 2013, we in fact decided on having this meeting this summer, possibly in Italy where their presence is more numerous.

In the trips made by the central secretariat during the year (in the Geographical Area of East Europe and South America) this vocation was launched to the second generation of the Focolare Movement, which for many was not so well-known. It was welcomed with great joy and so the first to adhere to the initiative were precisely the youth of these zones: Argentina, Slovacchia, Slovenia, Rumania, Portugal, aside from Brazil. And obviously Italy. It was precisely this experience of internationality that served as the sounding board that made us rediscover the beauty and peculiarity of this vocation

The specificity of the event was that it was dedicated to the youth members: and the next appointment will be open to youth adherents or those at large of the Parish and Diocesan Movements.

The title was: «Members in love», where the word «members» had to have different connotations: involved and committed.

They came in 200, with around fifty adult companions/animators who had the characteristic that of not replacing the youth, even in the various interventions and services.

They were totalitarian, and with the desire to follow God in an intense life of Jesus in the midst so as to build «Ut omnes», starting in their parishes and dioceses but with their hearts and

lives open to the whole world. The school was characterized by group sharing, with a strong presence of Jesus among them and their concreteness: every morning at 6:20, in collaboration with Caritas, three groups, alternating with each other, brought breakfast to the needy in the city or they worked in a training farm that assisted youth and marginalized persons.

Not only this: the need for a profound relationship with Jesus was expressed in their experiences. The moments of the Mass and the adoration were very intense, a private talk with Jesus that never seemed to end.

What emerged quite strongly was the need to continue this communion. There is a great desire to share experiences, initiatives, and to help each other by making trips and establishing twinning among the zones.

Aside from the involvement in the «United World Project» and in the participation in the next stage to be held in India, they planned to have «schools» in the different Little towns, another meeting in the summer of 2015 and a worldwide appointment at the same time as the coming WYD 2016 in Poland.

*Fr. Klaus Hofstetter, Sameiro Freitas,
Marco Bartolomei*

