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MARIAPOLI

Newsletter of the Focolare Movement



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Fruits of the Charism

The witness of Luce Ardente

Priority for the dialogues
Meetings with the Center of the Opera
A journey rich in novelty

School of New Humanities
Participation key word for fraternity

Divine diplomacy

The 14th of March, 2015 is dedicated to the deepening of the relationship between Chiara and politics.

The text that we are proposing is very actual now more than ever, in the complex and painful worldwide situation wherein many – and many of our people – are still suffering due to violence and ongoing wars

When someone weeps, we must weep too. And if someone laughs, we too rejoice too. Thus the cross is divided and borne by many shoulders, and joy is multiplied and shared by many hearts.

Making ourselves one with our neighbour is a way, the way par excellence, to make ourselves one with God. Because when we love in this way, the first two and most important commandments are fused into one. Making ourselves one with our neighbour for love of Jesus, with the love of Jesus, so that our neighbour, sweetly wounded by the love of God in us, will want to make himself or herself one with us, in a mutual exchange of help, of ideals, of projects, of affections. Do this to the point of establishing between the two of us those essential elements so the Lord can say, "Where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them" (Mt 18:20). Until, that is, as far as it depends on us, the presence of Jesus is guaranteed, so that we walk through life, always, as a little Church on the move – Church whether we are at home, at school, in a garage or in Parliament, walking through life like the disciples of Emmaus with that Third among them, who gives divine value to all our actions.

Then we are not the ones acting in our life, we who are miserable and limited, lonely and suffering. The Almighty walks with us. And whoever remains united with him bears much fruit.

From one cell come more cells, from one tissue many tissues. Making ourselves one with our neighbour in that complete self-forgetfulness which those possess (without realizing it or specifically trying to do it) who think of the other, their neighbour.

This is the diplomacy of charity, which has many of the expressions and features of ordinary diplomacy; hence it does not say all that it could say, for this would displease others and would be disagreeable to God. It knows how to wait, how to speak, how to reach its goal. It is the divine diplomacy of the Word who becomes flesh to make us divine.



New York, 28 maggio 1997. Intervento di Chiara all'Onu

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Prayer the most beautiful moment of the day

in the spirituality of Chiara Lubich

This diplomacy, however, has an essential and characteristic mark that differentiates it from the diplomacy spoken about by the world, where “diplomatic” is often synonymous with reticence or even falsehood.

Divine diplomacy has this greatness and this property, perhaps a property of it alone: it is moved by the good of the other and is therefore devoid of any shadow of selfishness.

This rule of life ought to inform all of diplomacy, and with God it can be done because he is not only the master of individuals, but king of the nations and of every society.

If all diplomats in the exercise of their duty were inspired in their actions by charity toward the other State as toward their own, they would be enlightened to such an extent by the help of God as to share in establishing relationships among States as they ought to exist among human beings. Charity is a light and a guide, and the one who is sent as an emissary has all the graces to be a good emissary.

May God help us and may we cooperate, so that from heaven the Lord may see this new sight: his last will and testament brought to life among the nations.

It may seem like a dream to us, but for God it is the norm, the only one that guarantees peace in the world, the fulfilment of individuals in the unity of a humanity that by that point would know Jesus.

Chiara

(taken from: Chiara Lubich, *Essential Writings*, New City Press, New York 2007, pp. 233-234.)

«If on some rare occasion I find that I am able to recollect myself in a solitary place and to pray there, sometimes I perceive, in that silence that is unbroken neither by telephones, nor radios, nor cars, or even by the street noises, how much this silence speaks. I realize that where there is noise the silence of God is there, and where there is silence, the voice of God is there» and still another *«The most beautiful moment of the day is when one prays, because one talks with the one he loves the most»*: these are phrases of Chiara Lubich which express well the fundamental importance that prayer had in her life, it was for her the expression of the union with God and at the same time it was a way to reach that union. It is an aspect of the spiritual life that is found within the charism of unity and in it one can find its genuine expression and its most original characteristics.

A fruit of the theme shared by Fr. Fabio Ciardi during the meeting of the focolarini and the focolarine of Italy (December 2014), this volume gathers some of the writings of Chiara on prayer with the intention of «shedding light on how she prayed» and to get to know more about her profound interiority. Following an introduction on the meaning and a history of prayer – what are and how many forms of prayer exist? How does one pray? – Ciardi offers an *excursus* (brief comment; historical background) on prayer in the life of Chiara and an interview with Eli. These are followed by a selection of Chiara’s thoughts on the topic and some of her prayers.



Luce Ardente in Italy

What I learned from Chiara

He came from Thailand so as to be near his friend Francis Xavier Kriengsak Kovithavanij, Archbishop of Bangkok, on the occasion of his nomination as a Cardinal, Phramaha Thongrattana Thavorn – Luce Ardente – stayed for a few days in Italy, passing through Rome, Lucca, Latina and Loppiano

To be able to share what has happened and is continuing to happen with Luce Ardente, is simple but also difficult: because it is intense, swift, with important and significant meetings. God – I think – makes history without announcing in advance what is going to happen. Just as Luce Ardente affirmed, the «presence» of Chiara is what moves him. A presence which is synonymous to virtue, love, light, Wisdom, dialogue with everyone. «She is behind me to protect me: her virtues make me a monk who is different from the others». And this is not something of the past, but it is of the present, of today, that works, inspires, urges towards universal love and that touches everyone who encounters it. Saturday 14th and Sunday 15th of February were spent by Luce Ardente in the Vatican, to be near his friend, the new Cardinal of Bangkok, Francesco Xavier Kriengsak Kovithavanij: at the end of the celebrations, he greeted as many Cardinals as he could, also Bishops, priests, religious sisters, lay people, from the Chinese to the Thai, from Tonga to Germany.

He did not shy away from any human contact, including the women and the young girls, politely asking them not to put their hands on his shoulders, as he is a Buddhist monk. Every occasion was good to give a beautiful and incisive testimony of «belonging» to the Focolare



Movimento, of being the «son of Chiara», often astonishing the people he spoke with. He told me how important it is the find «open hearts» that are able to understand and follow the Ideal of «mama Chiara» and to work together with us to bring unity to everyone. The Thai ambassadors to the Vatican and to Italy were visibly happy and impressed. The meeting with Emmaus Voce, in the afternoon of

February 17, was lived with great intensity by Luce Ardente: he went to her to share his story and to offer his help «to bring the testimony of his journey to the new Cardinals and to all the Buddhists». He came without expecting anything, only to love, and the joy of both and of all those present was great.

A visit to Latina, to the school that participates in the project to support the Karen refu-



In Piazza San Pietro

gees from Mae Sot in Thailand was also scheduled, including a visit to the school «*Goccia dopo goccia* (Drop by drop)». The children were able to greet him, ask him questions, touch him, offer him food, take pictures: Luce Ardent was touched by the pureness of a little girl, who, escaping from her teacher, attached herself to his leg and didn't want to let go of him.

In the evening of February 18, with around 200 members of the Focolare Movement and also with others, he gave very profound answers with regards to his relationship with Chiara.

It was Chiara, as Luce Ardent said, who taught him about love that was open to all and without boundaries; it was Chiara who forced him to «return» towards Buddhism so as to understand its most essential points. In Loppiano, to the priests of *Vinea Mea*, he repeated and expounded on this concept: «Chiara, with her virtues is like the waves of the sea that reject what is dirty and throws out the rubbish onto the beach: whoever comes near her, if he or she is not pure or open, will not understand her and will go away». The dialogue with a group of Muslims from Iran who were visiting the Little Town, was delicate but in the end, the explanation about his garment, the colour of his *Jivorn* (mantle), of the *bat* (the bowl that is used for the daily collection) and... the many photos really melted their hearts and the initially hesitant smiles. As I write this, the cold winds of Loppiano force us to remain indoors at the Claritas School, which Luce Ardent calls «my home». He goes around the rooms and in the



Card. Francis Xavier Kriengsak Kovithavanij, archbishop of Bangkok (Thailand) is the coordinator of the Bishops friends of the Focolare Movement. During the Consistory on February 14, 2015 he was nominated as Cardinal by Pope Francis. Present at the ceremony in the Vatican was also the Buddhist monk Phramaha Thongratana Thavorn-Luce Ardent, here in the photo with him.

chapel to be with the religious priests, to live his relationship with Chiara with all those he meets. Luce Ardent expects to see the love of Chiara in all of us, and through that which he perceives as the love of Jesus on the cross, as he loves to say: «Suffering became death and death is transformed into life, because Jesus realizes completely the *Anata* and the *Sunyata*, the teachings of Buddhism: Jesus completely lost himself, he gave himself for everyone out of love, without reservation (*Anata*) and He "killed" his own ego on the cross, he completely lost his own self, always out of love».

Luigi Butori



Novelty at the Center

Dialogues priority of the Opera

In January the meetings of the Center of the Opera with the different Centers of the Movement began which will continue up to April. Moments of communion, among balance sheets and prospects. Here are some of the new developments

A common house. It is the house where last year, the first four dialogues of the Movement were transferred. It was a housing solution that facilitates the contacts, exchanges, so that the communion among them also becomes a part of everyday life and is a beautiful opportunity to work more as a team. The appointment that began the meeting of the Center of the Opera with the different Centers started on this note. «It is not so much a joining together so that we can do more – Emmaus sustained – but because the root is the same, the call to “Ut omnes”».

She further underlined: «We must aim at “That all may be one”, therefore to always maintain a universal outlook». Having this as the first

The exchange among those present touched various aspects: from the ability to become experts in dialogue whom the others would recognize as such, to the need for a formation of all our intern members, not only of those in charge of dialogue, up to the point of hypothesizing that the programmes of formation of the branches and the movements could be structured from the point of view of dialogue.

They were reminded of the importance for more shared efforts, overcoming the fear of «going out» in this field; the challenge of linking the Catholic identity in relation to the other Churches and the different religions is not hidden away, nor the difficulty of talking about dialogue to those who are living in situations of conflict, that can be overcome only with a direct experience of welcome.



Al centro: Roberto Catalano, Christina Lee e Rita Moussallem con la Segreteria del terzo dialogo

The time for ecclesial maturity

Every dialogue has its own history and its own journey and the range of these dialogues that is gradually revealed is rich.

Margaret Karam and Marc St-Hilaire, the persons responsible for dialogue within the Catholic Church, highlight how, after the

third worldwide convention of the ecclesial Movements and new communities which was held last year, one can notice that, having gone beyond the stage of getting to know each other, of respect and friendship, we are now faced with the challenge of «the ecclesial maturity which must be incarnated decisively in the most pressing and urgent daily issues». Many of the Movement welcomed these challeng-

among the 28 meetings that the Center of the Opera has scheduled from January 29 to April 29, was just by chance; but in the things of God, as someone highlighted, it was an indication of a priority for the Opera, a basic approach that, in a transversal way, must animate all that the Opera itself is living and doing. This was the viewpoint that would also characterize the subsequent meetings.



Emmaus con Xenia Tovar (Mppu)

es in the same way that the numerous people who are committed in the different ecclesial bodies, both on the local and national levels, or maybe who are in contact with various charismatic realities (a partial mapping indicates around 500), not to mention the Movements of the various Christian Churches, behind the impetus of «Together for Europe» who did likewise.

In perspective, is the attention to be given to the formation and involvement in some of the more important events: the National Ecclesial Convention of the Italian Church in Florence, in November of this year; «Together for Europe» in Munich and the World Youth Day in Krakow in 2016.

Christians and witnesses

The centrality of the Word as the point of unity was highlighted by Maria Wienken and Diego Goller, who are now the central delegates for the dialogue with the various Churches and ecclesial Communities. Some questions arose regarding the approach that the different ecumenical groups who gather around the Word of life have to take with respect to the new formula that no longer bears the comments of Chiara.

Regarding the formation Jesús Morán underlined how it is the «task of the forthcoming times, to reflect together on the aspect of the Indigo, because all the dialogues have a dimension of the Indigo». We hope that with the new set-up the network of those responsible (of the dialogues) in the councils of the Zones and Zonette can continue to carry out their functions and to look at the future programmes: an ecumenical week is to be held in 2017 and another event on the occasion of the 500 years of the Reformation, which was planned initially only in Germany but after the suggestion of Emmaus and Jesús, it was seen as opportune to



Maria Wienken (seconda da destra) e Diego Goller con la Segreteria del secondo dialogo

have it also at Castel Gandolfo because «it is too important, not only in Germany; it could also be a beautiful moment of witness».

We hope to have one or more schools for the reality of the Pentecostals in Latin America, to continue bringing ahead the first fruitful meeting held at Castel Gandolfo in 2014.

Co-protagonist of different faiths

«In the last six years, for our members of the different religious traditions, it was important to perceive that the Opera would bring ahead the legacy of Chiara – exhorted the persons responsible for interreligious dialogue,



Segreteria dell'Economia di Comunione

Roberto Catalano and Rita Moussalem. This certainty has contributed to the continuation of the path taken not only as friends but as co-protagonists of dialogue». Among the results of this process, for example, is the fact that some Muslim «collaborators» have already met to start writing the themes on the points of the spirituality from the Muslim point of view; another result is that some Jewish, Muslim, Hindu



Margaret Karram e Marc St-Hilaire del primo dialogo

and Buddhist persons feel that they are part of the Opera in all ways.

A diversified path according to the religions, but each one well-defined. The forms of dialogue that are being consolidated in time are many: from the dialogue of life to the activities of different kinds (social, educational projects and programmes of integration) and to the collaboration with organizations; from the exchanges of religious experiences to academic conventions. The collaboration has also continued with the youth, a guarantee of future prospects. The Catholic Church appreciates this style of dialogue, and asks for our presence in conventions and also for our contribution on the academic level, also for articles to be published in specialized magazines.

Together in sustaining human values

Twenty years have passed since that first encounter with Chiara, in Loppiano in 1995, with a group of persons without any religious convictions. On that occasion Chiara recognized that these people, filled with human values, are a gift for the Movement itself because they underline the human part of Jesus. Vida Rus and Andrew Camilleri, the persons responsible of the fourth dialogue, spoke of the contribution given to the

Opera by the «friends»: a concrete chance to develop a language that is understandable and inclusive of everyone; an assistance which must be kept in mind with regards to the importance of incarnating the Ideal of unity, with attention given to being citizens who are committed in society, and not to close one's eyes in the face of calamities, injustices, social tragedies. They noted the need to regain the drive and enthusiasm together with New Humanities, Youth for a United World and the Inundations. Human values and existential questions could be the central points of the meetings at the Center, in the Zones, in the local communities, in a society that has by now become multicultural, multireligious and secularized.

The fruitful experience of the general Assembly with the presence of people of different Churches, other religions, without any religious convictions is still present in everyone, just as (even if only for an afternoon) was the



Da sinistra: Andrew Camilleri e Vida Rus con la Segreteria del quarto dialogo

presence of friends from other Movements, both Catholic and non, linked to «Together for Europe». An icon of the Opera today.

Politics and participation

The appointment for next anniversary of the departure of Chiara, centred on the theme of the political dimension of the charism of unity, is for the Movement of Politics for Unity, an important step in a big task that is aimed in three directions: the go in depth with the political thoughts born from the charism of Chiara; to reinforce the network and the incidence of the MpU; to increase the contribution of the whole Opera to an integrated work done in synergy. A solid study is being planned, which includes



Jesús Morán con Alberto Ferrucci (EdC)

the elaboration and the production of a political school of thought based on the charisma in collaboration with the Abba School, the Sophia University Institute and making use of Città Nuova and of the publication Nuova Umanità (New Humanity).

The development of the MpU which has already been established in some countries (Argentina, Uruguay, Brazil, Spain, Switzerland, Germany, France, Italy, Hungary, South Korea) is going ahead; it is undergoing a revision in other countries (Paraguay, Portugal, Czech Republic, Slovakia); in other countries it is just getting started (England, Belgium, Cameroun, the Philippines).

A working network has been started with the other realities of the Opera, from Teens for Unity to the Youth for a United World (it is enough to consider the schools on politics which in the past 10 years has involved around seven thousand youth, of which around 80 percent were not gen), to New Humanity, up to «Together for Europe».

A generation of entrepreneurs

24 years, a generation. The Economy of Communion launched by Chiara in 1991 has al-

ready reached this milestone. Therefore it is now the time to evaluate a reality that has for some time now surpassed the age of maturity and is now moving forward into a new cycle of its journey. We speak of the «passage from the original witnesses to a new generation of entrepreneurs, workers and intellectuals, a fundamental operation» in order to ensure the future. A passage which has been in preparation for several years now, wherein attention was given to the youth, holding international Summer schools (nine realized so far from 2009 up to today in Italy, Argentina, Kenya, Portugal, Spain, Mexico, France, Ukraine, Croatia) and organizing workshop schools on specific topics for youth who have the vocation to be entrepreneurs or who would like to be formed in their work, in spirit and in practice by the EoC. A new protagonism of the entrepreneurs has been noted with the strengthening of the associations already existing and the birth of new national associations which, in synergy with the Industrial Parks and the zone commissions, carry out their work of supporting the local businesses that belong to the association and collaborate in the spreading of the culture of the economy of communion. The Aipece, for example, which was born in Italy only three years ago, now has more than 200 members and is an authentic instrument for the diffusion of the project.

The cultural impact in the Church and in society is also growing, in interreligious ambits and in the academic level, as with a presence in the media and in the social networks. The profits are also increasing: inspite of the economic crisis, the profits this year have increased 20 percent, totalling more than a million Euros. Everything



Il Centro dell'Opera con la Segreteria del Movimento politico per l'unità

is positive? Critical areas and challenges are not lacking. The life of the Industrial Parks is not easy: the businesses established in them have financial and economic difficulties and they are reflecting on what is their function within the Little Towns and the EoC in their country of origin. A redefinition of governance is needed, with the necessity of reinforcing the local commissions of the EoC. There is a felt need to go beyond the financial «assistance» given to persons in



Leo Andringa (EdC) e Juanita Majuri (GZ Africa)

need and to launch development projects with the creation of jobs, something which is difficult to do due to the lack of people who are available and capable. Finally it must be taken into consideration the fact that 80 percent of the profits comes from around only 10 percent of the businesses.

The EoC has nevertheless a plan of development already in action, at least in part: openness to dialogue and to cooperation with other groups and people outside the structure of the Opera («the charism of unity “sings” when we work with others», was affirmed); to review the governance of the international commission, delegating more both territorially and for the projects; to present the EoC with the breadth and generosity of Chiara, as a wide path for a fraternal economic environment, and not with the aim of collecting funds for the projects linked to the Movement; to become widespread, but well anchored to the community of the Opera.

prepared by the editorial board

Sophia University Institute

The eighth academic year is now open for enrollment

The courses on various disciplines are becoming more enriched, while the international prospects are becoming more definite.

A new enthusiasm also from the words of Pope Francis on the occasion of the Fiftieth Anniversary of Loppiano

«If I must share about my experience in Sophia, I would talk precisely about the possibility of having a greater coherence in my daily life, with the discovery of the authentic connection between studies and concrete life, between knowledge and knowing how to live». This is how Mathieu from France, a first year student, summarized his course of study on the Culture of Unity at Sophia. And when it is not possible to enroll in the masteral degree course, there are those who participate in some of the courses as guest students, or they also join in the extra-curricular academic initiatives, and everyone finds themselves greatly enriched. Like Chiara, a doctorate student in Constitutional Law in Milan, who participat-



ed last February in the interdisciplinary *Winter School, organized in Trent*, on the topic of innovation: «The horizon that philosophy and theology have opened up for me has been greatly enriched and I would like to participate in the research programme that is developing in Sophia on the topic of conflict and conflicts among religions». Testimonies shared reveal different itineraries.

In the meantime the enrollment for the new academic year 2015/2016 has started, and Sophia begins its eighth year of life. The persons enrolled in the various academic courses are growing gradually but constantly, as revealed by the numbers – 115 – are those who requested to participate, by enrolling in the annual Diploma, bi-annual Degree, or Doctorate of research. The agreements between Sophia and various universities all over the world are also increasing in view of the recognition of titles granted.

Thinking of the near future, the dean Piero Coda observed that «a series of events have made us perceive a new and promising momentum. Starting from the message of Pope Francis, during LoppianoLab 2014, on the occasion of the fiftieth year of the Little City: *"We must imagine and experience a new culture on all levels of social life: from the family to politics to economy: the culture of relationships. [...] It is not by chance that it is in Loppiano that for some years now the Sophia University Institute, erected by the Holy See, finds its residence. There is an urgent need, in fact, for young people, for men and women, who, aside from being*



suitably prepared in the various disciplines, are at the same time soaked in the wisdom that flows from the love of God"».

The Dean underlined how also in the guidelines that have emerged from the general Assembly of the Work of Mary, reference is made to Sophia, with the wish that it be *«at the service of the cultural and social formation and that decisive steps are taken for a greater interaction between the cultural agencies and the media of the Movement, in particular with the Sophia University Institute».*

What the document hopes for Sophia is a greater internationality and a presence also outside of Europe. Some ongoing projects in fact have precisely taken this direction: after the positive experience in the Mariapolis Lia in O'Higgins, of the third edition of the *Escuela de Verano* for Latin America using the Spanish language and the meeting at the Mariapolis Ginetta for Brazil, in unity with the Center of the Opera and the zones who are interested, they are bringing ahead a collective reflection on the future of Sophia in Latin America.

From July 19 to 25, 2015 the first *Summer School* that will be held in Loppiano at the residence of the Institute, is scheduled, in synergy with the world gen2 Centers: «Maps of the future. When, where, how tomorrow starts», an initiative that will allow many other young people to make an experience at and of Sophia.

For all information on the Institute and on registration: www.iu-sophia.org.

Daniela Ropelato



School of New Humanity

Working for fraternity

450 participants from 31 Countries, people of diverse ages, culture, professions and vocations. The working methodology on the three central themes was also innovative: poverty and social justice, migration and interculture, conflicts and prospects for peace

On the big screen on the side of the stage, pages of the newspapers glide past quickly. They are alternated with video-news, comments, summaries; the images offer a panoramic view of the present times, linked to the three different themes, one per day: poverty and social justice, migration and interculture, conflicts and prospects for peace. In front of an international press release some faces, in the beginning, are quite incredulous, but slowly, entering into the theme, their surprise gives way to participation, especially thanks to the perspectives that the experts and testimonies place at the disposition of the participants through reports and experiences.



It was an intense team work that brought ahead the four days of the school that the New Humanity Movement had organized at Castel Gandolfo from February 12 to 15, and moreover the title spoke very clearly: «Working for fraternity». And this is what happened. But let's start, as usual, with numbers: 450 participants from 31 Countries,

from all the vocations, of all professions and trades, not to mention the students, with a more numerous than usual participation of the young people. More than 10 simultaneous translations for a school open not only to intern members of the Movement, but also to all those who are involved in society and who share the values that New Humanity promotes worldwide. A rather varied audience that was active and rich in initiatives.

After the numbers there are the formulas, and here is the one of the programme, which we can say is totally innovative, and has its roots in the guidelines of the general Assembly 2014. If it is necessary to «go out», «together» and «prepared», what then does a mass movement like New Humanity, committed to incarnating the Charism precisely in society have to do? Here is the answer: by going to look for the wounds, by striving to understand together what are the things to be healed, where are the urgencies and then to act consequently. We start from the «outside», in order to understand how to act also from the «inside».

Such a choice meant to overturn the classical formula of our meetings, on which the entire central secretariat had worked on for these past few months, paying particular attention to using a language that is inclusive, placing our



Fanny Bava Furnò
e Domenico Mancinelli

A Handing over of witnesses

On February 11, a day before the school began, the secretariats of New Humanity of the Zones met with the central secretariat for a reciprocal updating and to entrust to each one the participants to the school. It was a moment of encounter and of comparison so as to be always more at the service of the life that is developing in the various geographical territories. The day was also spent as an occasion to greet and to thank Annamaria Sanità, central delegate of New Humanity from 2011 to 2014, and to welcome the new delegate, Fanny Bava Furnò, who will be working with Domenico Mancinelli, was re-confirmed in his position. Fanny, a Volunteer, married, with two daughters, lives and works in Rome. In the past three years she was at the Center of the Women Volunteers in Grottaferrata; her experience as a gen at the international secretariat of the Youth for a United World is precious to her.

focus on themes that are actual and global, studied in depth with experts and enlightened by the Dialogues that the Opera has always been bringing ahead. Taking as big risk, we worked on an innovation in the use of the venues of the Mariapolis Center, in time management, technological support through videos *skype* link-ups, live interviews with protagonists from the various continents, multimedial material and support in every working session.

Thus the programme was very much suited to the needs of the participants: «This formula allows us to

invite people whom we have not been able to invite up to now: our colleagues, friends, relatives...», this was an impression from Germany. A gen: «I saw how the Ideal can be presented to the world». «It is a world that we can reproduce in the Zone», commented the delegates. Some of the Youth for a United World underlined the importance of knowing about New Humanity, adding: «It was a “super” Congress, really a “hands on” experience!».

There were also moments of exchanges, during the *workshops* and in open group sharing of ideas and proposals that adopted the methodology of the *world café*: 21 international groups and three different levels of contributions gathered.

Communion became a valid working methodology to identify the needs and the resources within a territory and to respond to them. «We remove Jesus the man from the cross and we bring him back to the city», was one of the concluding impressions of a participant: the work that is now waiting for us in our neighborhoods, our factories, our schools, in our homes, will be the means to realize precisely this objective.

Paolo Balduzzi, secretariat of New Humanity

You can find the materials for study in the website www.umanitanuova.org and in the official Facebook page, by searching for Centro Internazionale Umanità Nuova



Priest Volunteers

To go out with the Church

The retreat of the priest Volunteers held at Castel Gandolfo from February 3 to 7 gathered more than 300 participants, from Europe and from the continents outside Europe, especially from South Korea and Africa

The main theme, the Eucharist, mystery of communion, deepened and illuminated this vocation in the incarnation of the Ideal of the charism of unity, in its specific dimension of permeating every ecclesial structure and activity. The first day was spent as a spiritual «retreat», a «face to face» with Jesus in the Eucharist, culminating in the collective Eucharistic Adoration in the evening. Themes common to the whole Opera were tackled



in the succeeding days, expressed with the words: «together» – «to go out» – «suitably prepared». In a special way, the visit of Emmaus and the Center of the Opera made us «contemplate», in an atmosphere of family, the beauty of unity in universality of the charism, revealed in all geographical areas of the world.. The new set-up of the Opera opened the eyes of everyone to welcome the new situations, which, if for some, were not lacking in questions and difficulties, especially due to the distances and the factor of age, they have made us see a turning point that has increased the sense of co-responsibility of our vocation. The intervention of Jesús Morán widened our hearts with a renewed «passion» for the Church, in complete harmony with the heart of Pope Francis. Jesús focused on «going out with the Church», in this «present day» in which the Holy Spirit is pushing for an evangelical reformation.

For this reason the co-president explained, that to be adequately prepared we need a «new intelligence» with regards to the charism, a more profound understanding of our mission of incarnating unity; there is the need to «mediate» the charism also by using a new language in order to make it understood and welcomed. Their particular area of action is the Church and the most actual vocation of the priest Volunteer is to become «today» promoters of this reform. The *forum*, held in the afternoon was also quite special since it was freely conducted by the participants: a way of participation that favoured the reciprocal knowledge of the new Zones and deepened the «direction» to be taken in this new journey: the vocation that gets its source from the charism; our place in the Opera, especially in the local communities; the creativity, encouraged by the Pope, so as to open up new experiences «in going out, together and prepared», in the local realities both ecclesial and civil and in lighting up the Ideal in every cultural, theological and educational dimension.

In the end many affirmed that they received many gifts in those days, above all the gift of having lived together in that divine atmosphere that the Holy Spirit always brings among us and which makes us feel first of all that we are a «family» so as to keep alive the legacy that Chiara left us.

Fr. Istvan Kopasz



d. Istvan, terzo da destra, con il Centro dei sacerdoti volontari

Men and women of communion



26 aprile 2014. Giovani religiosi a Loppiano

«We understood our place as religious in the Opera today, arriving at the perception of our specific contribution: to bring, through the variety of charisms (clarificati), “something more” of ecclesiality in the Opera». «Chiara taught us that being in the present times requires norms and projects which are at par with the times; and that there is an extraordinary coincidence between that which the Church and the world are asking from consecrated life». QThese are some of the comments made after the meetings of the men and women religious which had the Eucharist as its main theme and with moments dedicated to the new generations and to the life of the local communities.

The presence of Card. João Braz de Aviz, prefect of the Congregation for the Institutes of consecrated life and the Societies of apostolic life, was something special. «*To grow in the spirituality of unity and to live it – he suggested to us – because when charisms meet they become alive and the Work of Mary makes the charisms shine, it illuminates them. Words are not needed – he continued – it is enough to be witnesses of the Gospel lived; this is the pathway to change.*»

We asked some questions to the new persons responsible for the women and men religious, Sr. Antonia Moioli and Fr. Salvo D’Orto.

The treasures of the charism that meet in the light of unity emerged from the meetings at Castel Gandolfo. Interview of Sr. Antonia Moioli sbg and Fr. Salvo D’Orto omi, the new person responsible for the women and men religious

To start out as the persons responsible in the Year of consecrated life. A happy «coincidence»?

Fr. Salvo: «Without a doubt, looking at our journey guided by the hand of God, it is apparent that we are dealing with an enormous resource of grace. Thinking of the intervention of Pope Francis on consecrated life, among which is the Apostolic Letter of November 2014 during the beginning of the Year: it is a true and proper programme for us. Our recent meeting at Castel Gandolfo of the branch of the men religious unfolded starting from the three indications of Pope Francis: “*to look at the past with gratitude, to live the present with passion and to embrace the future with hope*”».

Sr. Antonia: «Certainly it is a favourable coincidence, born from the heart of Pope Francis for all the consecrated men and women. The Apostolic Letter written by the Pope was an immense joy for us; in reading it, I felt within me a strong agreement with everything that Chiara from the very beginning had offered to us who are consecrated. I am convinced that this year will be a herald of graces and I am certain that each one personally and as Institutes will become more capable of living an evangelical radicalness and prophecy, going out to the existential peripheries with creativity».

The presence of the religious in the Opera has a long history. According to you, are there some elements that have been overlooked with the passage of time and which could possibly be recovered?

Sr. Antonia: «The presence of the religious men and women truly has a long history, they have been present since the very beginning of the Movement in the first Mariapolises, coming from Italy and from other Countries. They were attracted by the atmosphere of the family and by the supernatural that came from reciprocal love that was lived and which brought the presence of Jesus in the midst of his people. It is an experience lived by many, even by me. The women religious have the vocation to unity and they are very much aware of the points of the spirituality and the life of the Opera and they try to be faithful to them. Maybe we have to go back to the personal relationships with the people we meet and to remember what Chiara has given us: to love the religious family of the other as if it were my own and also to revitalize the communion of material and spiritual goods».

Fr. Salvo: «In the beginning, the men religious had a direct relationship with the members of the Movement,

then our branch became a little bit closed into itself. What the Opera is living today underlining the importance of the local communities, will certainly help the men religious to regain even better the life as “a body” of the early times. For us the word “together”, given to us by the general Assembly, means to recover our full communion with the entire people of Chiara».

As Centers most of the members are almost all new. How are you taking your first steps together?

Fr. Salvo: «The new Center, represents together the Council of the branch and the Secretariat of the movement of the religious. It does not mean that one of the realities has disappeared, but it is the acquisition of a greater awareness that we are called to live for unity. Whoever belongs to the branch of the religious is invited by God to be, in a stronger way, the heart and the arms of the movement of the religious. Both myself and the other four members of the Center will not leave our positions in our Institutes; Emmaus linked this with the “going out” of the Opera today.

I remember a phrase of Chiara that was shared to us when we were genRe in '87: “We don't give the Ideal so that the religious will belong to the Opera, but so that the Church is transformed”.

The new members of the Center, who have the approval of their Superiors, are: Fr. Fabrizio Tosolini, Saverian in Parma, Fr. Egidio Canil ofm conv in Assisi, Fr. Theo Jansen ofm cap in



Chiara nel 1956 si era recata in Terra Santa per incontrare p. Novo (terzo da sinistra)



Baita Paradiso, agosto 2000. Da destra: Vale Ronchetti, sr. Antonia Moioli, sr. Erminia Gandolfi, sr. Anne Margaret Dalton, sr. Loretto Maes, sr. Giusi Buffa

Loppiano, Fr. Donato Cauzzo, Camillian, and Jos Van Boxel, of the White Fathers in Rome, Fr. Mariano Steffan ofm cap end myself in Castelli. We meet every week through video-conference and we often call each other by telephone. we have scheduled a two-day meeting every month and a half. Our first commitment is that of always having Jesus in our midst».

Sr. Antonia: «Yes it is true, the persons have changed. The experience lived tells me that the Holy Spirit gives us the vocation to unity and whoever is open will listen to Him and will live this vocation with commitment and co-responsibility. So, with the approval of their Superiors, one can give time for the Opera so as to keep the flame of unity alive and, together with the other consecrated men and women, to form consecrated persons who live communion in every environment, in the parishes, in the communities, in the offices, everywhere. I would also like to underline that the Institute or religious family who have members with the vocation to unity will surely receive in return the graces for the life of the Institute and for the development of their charism, which was given to the founder or foundress, that will be enriched by the life of the charism of unity, shining with a new light, open to new horizons and shared challenges. It is an experience of reciprocity! In order to be updated and in communion among us we make use

of the means of communication and we meet regularly for a day or two».

What do you have in your heart for the branches and the movement of the men and women religious?

Sr. Antonia: «That everyone will have the possibility of knowing and living the spirituality of unity or of communion with all its instruments, so that the Church will become always more a Church of communion and also so that the ecclesiology of communion expressed in the documents of the Second Vatican Council may be developed with our contribution. Our charisms in this synergy will become more alive, more suited to the times today and able to live fraternity, just as our founders and foundresses have seen in heaven and lived on earth».



Febbraio 2015. Da sinistra: p. Mariano Steffan, p. Donato Cauzzo, p. Egidio Canil, p. Salvo D'Orto, p. Fabrizio Tosolini, p. Theo Jansen

Fr. Salvo: «That they live for "Ut Omnes" according to what Chiara has placed in our heart and, because of this, to contribute to the realization of the words of Pope Francis: "I expect the communion among all the members of the different Institutes to grow. Couldn't this year be the occasion to go out with greater courage from the boundaries of one's own Institute so as to elaborate together on a local nad global level, common projects of formation, evangelization and social interventions? In this way a real prophetic testimony can be offered more effectively. Communion and encounter among the different charisms and vocations is a journey of hope"».

prepared by the editorial board

With commitment and enthusiasm

«I am happy to give each one of you who are here at the Congress, my warmest greetings». these were the first words of the message of Emmaus that welcomed the more than 1800 participants to the two congresses of the adherents that took place in November 2014 and January 2015 at the Mariapolis Center of Castel Gandolfo. «Your letter with the updating on the Assembly – they replied at once – made us immediately feel that we are an integral and living part of the family of Chiara. And what can we say about the marvelous theme on the Eucharist! The practical and at the same time profound approach was made precisely for us and it stimulated us to come closer and more often to the Eucharist, to “take advantage” of it as the bond of unity and the guarantee of eternal life!».

There were many life experiences shared during the programme. Many found themselves expressed in the experiences of the families and in those of New Humanity, especially in the field of work. One of the presentors invited the mayor of Castel Gandolfo, Milvia Monachesi, who was present in the hall during the session on the Economy of Communion. The format of starting the day with a prayer taken from the liturgy of the Week of prayer for Christian unity recited by persons from different Churches was very much appreciated. Many of those present who had experienced the gen life with Peppuccio Zanghi, who left for Paradise during the second congress, were happy to have had the possibility of greeting him during the visit to the Center of the Opera and to participate in his funeral through *live streaming*.



To be a family

A living community, that of Latina, in central Italy, with more than a hundred among members and adherents of the Focolare Movement. All the vocations and the age groups were present. Here in synthesis are some of the experiences shared during the congress of the adherents at Castel Gandolfo

«It is a deep relationship that was born in our community and which is consolidated by various experiences. Last July many adults placed themselves at the disposition of the Teens for Unity and their friends by becoming animators, companions and cooks at their camp site “Stop & Go”. A short while later some members of the community suggested to live together in a Mariapolis. So in August more than a hundred of us gathered at the Val di Luce, in the Tusco-Emilian Appenine mountains. There were families, children, teenagers, grandparents. There were also some priests present who generously offered themselves to celebrate the Mass and hear confessions. the teenagers who had participated in the camp came



again with their friends and parents and, arriving in the Mariapolis they proposed to everyone to live the "golden rule". Everyday we met for the Mass, we read the password and a short meditation. Each one offered his or her talents: there were those who organized a bread-making workshop; another planned the outings; someone else

prepared lunch; others brought the children on a botanical field trip or shared about the constellations one cool moonlit evening. One of us read aloud some excerpts of his book, written for his wife after she left for heaven, celebrating their Golden wedding anniversary between Heaven and Earth. Someone made us sing with all our might, composing songs that summarized the Mariapolis: *Christmas in summer*, with a double meaning, both meteorological and of the soul! When we went back home, we missed those days a lot. Having to face a mountain of laundry to do, one of us was surprised when a gen2, who had been to the Mariapolis with her mother, offered to do it: "because - she said - the Mariapolis continues"!

Recently some members of our community told us about a family of Muslim friends coming from Tunis, who because of financial problems were not able to buy the school books for their children. We then had the idea to organize a Tunisian dinner prepared by the mother of this

family wherein we invited people requesting a contribution from them. The dinner took place in a big terrace offered by one of our families; to transform the environment into an Arabic setting we all did our part bringing tables, curtains, rugs, cushions, candles. Together we prepared the menus and went to market. During the preparation we suddenly lost electricity. We said that we trusted in God and so we continued cooking by candlelight and just as the first guests started to arrive the electricity came back. There were fifteen families present. There was also a menu for the children which we prepared with the contribution of many. A group of gen3 offered to be the *babysitters*. It was an evening made up of care and attention for the



Alcuni della comunità di Latina al Congresso

other, an evening of dialogue, of laughter. The mother said that she felt as if she were back in Tunisia, with her big family. In the end we gave her an envelope with the money and written on it was: "Thank you for taking us with you on this trip to Tunis". Signed: "Your family from Latina". She burst into tears of joy. She confided to us that she experienced how good Christians and good Muslims can work together. With the money we had gathered she was able to buy the books needed. Recently we came to know that in another community of the zonetta there is a Pakistani family in serious difficulty. Immediately we said: "Now let's prepare a Pakistani dinner!"».

Gloria Duarte, Tim King



In Val di Luce durante la Mariapolis

Women Volunteers at their Congress To be the soul of our city



From January 29 to the 1° of February, 2015 the Mariapolis Center of di Castel Gandolfo welcomed 1060 women Volunteers who came for their meeting, coming from Italy, Western Europe, Lebanon, Brazil and Cameroun. Every morning the programme began with a meditation of Chiara and with the theme on the Eucharist, heart of the day. The moments of going in depth were rich and varied: from Vera Araujo who, with *wirdome* and *humor*, made an analysis of culture today; to Rita Moussalem and Roberto Catalano from the Center for interreligious dialogue who, with competence and concreteness, helped us in the understanding of the relationship between Islam and the western world. Thanks to Friederike Koller and Angel Bartol who highlighted the importance of the final document of the general Assembly, the work done in group was carried out in this light. From the moments of dialogue with Patience Mollè Lobè and with some of the members of the secretariat of New Humanity, what instead was emphasized was the vocation of the men and women Volunteers in its totality.

The sharing of experiences was also profound. Among them was that of Claire Ribet, a Volunteer of Cannes (France), who shared a rich and profound experience on dialogue. We would like to share it with you.

A Cannes un premio di fraternità

«Why don't we organize an interreligious meeting in Cannes to commemorate the 25° anniversary of the historical meeting of Assisi?» – this was the proposal that began an adventure, which brought me from my city Cannes, up to Rome.

It was 2011 and I was together with the local group of «Together for Europe» where Movements and communities belonging to different Christian Churches, share their charism, in the footsteps of the meetings that were started by Saint John Paul II during Pentecost 1998. The idea of an interreligious meeting in Cannes for the 25° of Assisi made us enthusiastic, and from it the project of an interreligious Festival including a march for peace was born. We immediately decided to involve the various religious leaders: from the Protestant pastor to the rector of the mosque in Cannes, Mustapha Dali, from the Rabbi David Moyal to the Buddhist Lama Sempa. To our great surprise all of them welcomed this with open arms, as if they had just been waiting for it to happen. A shortwhile later we started to meet together as the representatives of the Jewish, Christian, Muslim and Buddhist communities and we started the Association "Vivere insieme a Cannes" (VEAC – Vivre Ensemble A Cannes) "Living together in Cannes". Even if in the beginning I was the only woman,



I immediately felt at ease: in fact a true, simple and sincere relationship was established among us all. In three months we were able to organize the Festival: at the march for peace held at the *Croisette* there were more than a thousand people. From then on we have had four Festivals, all occasions to declare together that fraternity is possible among persons of different religions, believers and non-believers.

Together we have also organized events and conference-debates on dialogue; «mosaic» groups were also born wherein people of different religions could reflect together on a certain theme. With some young people we started a cooking *atelier*, to enter even more, even amidst the stoves, into the religion and the culture of the other. Once a week we have a fifteen minute radio programme on living together in Cannes in order to spread a culture of peace. Among us promoters, our friendship runs very deep; we see each other not just to organize events, but we meet regularly in each other's homes. We met on the occasion of the end of Ramadan and for the *barmitsva* of the rabbi's son, it is the moment in which a Jewish boy reaches the age of maturity; we also spent a day in a Buddhist temple and on the island of Lerins with the Cistercian monks. The reciprocal knowing about each other helps us also to share each other's daily life, carrying together joys and sufferings.

On January 17, a surprise. In the prestigious Hall of Protomoteca in Campidoglio, in Rome (Italy) we received an important recognition: the municipality of Cannes won the sixth edition

of the Chiara Lubich Award for fraternity. Our delegation, made up of fifteen people did not go unnoticed: the vivacity and the diversity of our clothes revealed the variety of our cultures. Present, among others, the Tibetan lama in charge of the Buddhist Meditation Center, the rector of the mosque, the Cistercian abbot and an Assessor to represent the Mayor. «*To the city of Cannes – the motivation for the award read – for having welcomed and supported the project VEAC – Vivre Ensemble A Cannes (Living together in Cannes) – where one learns how to get to know and to appreciate one another, to enrich each other reciprocally creating strong bonds of friendship and fraternity. [...] Everything acquires a higher meaning after the recent events that touched France and which spoke of everything except Peace and Fraternity. That Fraternity, at the threshold of Modernity, was underlined, together with the principles of Freedom and Equality, precisely in French land, with the wish and the invitation that it will no longer be the forgotten principle, but something lived and incarnated just as Cannes would like to do through the VEAC.*»

prepared by Anna Lisa Innocent

La delegazione di Cannes in Campidoglio



magazine of thought

New Humanity has changed!

The new editorial board
for a trimestral edition



News flash: *Nuova Umanità* (New Humanity) has gone from bi-monthly to tri-monthly. For what reason? It's simple: the crisis which is often talked about, and which has caused many to suffer, is above all a crisis of thought. Since *Nuova Umanità* is a magazine of thought, we felt the need to reorganize ourself so as to be able to better respond to the difficulties of the present. It becomes tri-monthly, therefore, because we want to take more time to understand where our civilization is going, to take more time to put ourselves in dialogue with all those who can help, more time to offer the culture that is born from the charism of the Focolare. The editorial board and the editor has also changed. The board is composed of all the new members of the Abbà School, the editor is the one who writes. Their task is not easy, but they have two big advantages: to work knowing that it must only be unity to bring ahead everything – just as Chiara recommended when she founded the magazine, in 1978 – and to follow the furrows traced out by their predecessors, to whom the most sincere thanks is in order. They made *Nuova Umanità* an excellent magazine, healthy, a point of reference not only for the members of the Movement, but for the whole Church and culture in general.

The next issue is foreseen for the end of March 2015. There will be some precious things in it. The first is the talk of Chiara in Rimini in 2002, entitled «Fraternity and peace for the

unity of peoples». At that time, the world was shaken by international terrorism and by the attacks on the Twin Towers and the message of Chiara was the proclamation of the unity among peoples and the citizens of the entire planet. After the terroristic attacks in Paris, the words of Chiara still indicate the solution to the wounds of our society. Another treasure in the coming issue is the first chapter the *Story of Light*, which is the story of Chiara Lubich written by Iginio Giordani. When Giordani gave to Giulia (Eli) Folonari the stack of papers, he said as follows: «this is my masterpeice, publish it only after my death». It is truly a masterpeice, written by a pen inflamed with love and with the competence of a biographer. The issue is also enriched by a talk that the Patriarch of Constantinople Bartholomew I, gave on the occasion of the canonization of John XXIII, on the ecumenical relations of Angelo Roncalli during his period in Istanbul, and the translation of some passages of a text of Mozi, an ancient Chinese sage, done by Philippe Hu, on the will of Heaven. And still more treasures in the magazine are the essays of Mons. Delgado Galindo, undersecretary of the Pontifical Council for the Laity, and one of Marta Michelacci, artist and art historian, and the interview that Roberto Catalano did of Marc Guedj, Rabbi who is particularly an expert in interreligious dialogue. See you in the pages of the new *Nuova Umanità*.

Alberto Lo Presti



Inundations

Sports and fraternity a possible relationship?

7° international Congress of Sportmeet, the first in Brazil

The 7° international Congress of Sportmeet which was held for the first time in Brazil, within the territory of San Paolo in the Mariapolis Ginetta from January 23 to 25, was very timely and opened up surprising prospects. The



participants, majority of whom were youth, came from the various states of Brazil; Austria, Argentina and Italy were also represented, with the international president of Sportmeet, Paolo Cipolli. The title posed a question: «Sports and fraternity: a possible relationship?». A question that many are asking with the coming Olympics 2016 that will once again put Brazil at the center of the world's attention.

The answer which emerged from the congress was: between Sports and fraternity the relationship is not only possible but it is indispensable. The experts proved it, like Vera Araujo linked up through *webex* from Italy and through the main talk of Paolo Crepez,

together with the many experiences and practical workshops. Here in Brazil, where one cannot avoid facing the serious social inequalities and the troubling escalation of violence, this «combination» gives life to creative forms of expression, which are capable of promoting social growth and development. Just one example. In the Jardim Margarida social center, situated within the Mariapolis Ginetta, which welcomes children and adolescents at risk, the dice of Sports4peace is rolled in every football tournament. This is expressed in asking for forgiveness, shaking the hand of a competitor, helping him to get up, cheering not only for one's own team. The victory is «something extra», what is more important is to participate rather than winning. «These tournaments – affirmed Lucila, coordinator of the project – have gained credibility, also in the nearby cities».

Among the new prospects for dialogue and collaboration, one of the more important ones is that which has started with the «Pierre Coubertin



Committee», which is involved in the development of sports values promoted by the French educator for whom this institution has been named. The resumption of the Olympics after 15 centuries of suspension is due to Coubertin. The president of the Brazilian committee, Prof. Nelson Todt, professor at the Catholic Pontifical University of Porto Alegre, highlighted the profound



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Carina Rossa, Kiko Sebok e Cristiano Bordonni Silva con Papa Francesco al Convegno «Scholas Occurrentes»

agreement of Sportmeet with the principles of the Olympics: freedom, unity of peoples, *fair play* and fraternity which this institution promotes.

New roads have been opened during the visit to the *Fazenda de Esperança* of Guaratinguetá (SP) and the *Casa do Menor*, in Rio de Janeiro. And still more: at the Congress promoted by the network of educational institutions «Scholas Occurrentes», that was held recently in the Vatican, Carina Rossa of EdU, and the Brazilians Kiko Sebok and Cristiano Bordonni Silva of Sportmeet participated as a fruit of the collaboration between the two inundations. Pope Francis spoke at the conclusion of the convention. When they greeted him they told him that he could count «on us of the Focolare Movement who are involved in sports and education». Surprised, he answered: «...in sports? Good!».

«We took a risk in preparing this Congress – Kiko said – not knowing how many people

Project Italy

Capable of making an impact

In Rome the 2° Parliamentary Laboratory of the Education Work Site was held in collaboration with the Italian Movement of politics for unity

Wednesday, February 11, the 2° Parliamentary Laboratory was held in Rome, as requested by some of the parliamentarians, and prepared together with some of the people of the Movement belonging to the Education Work Site of Project Italy.

This time we were a restricted group of experts and «insiders», called to deepen the theme of the «the right of anyone born in the territory of a state to nationality or citizenship», or rather the right of Italian citizenship which can be granted to non-Italian teens who have completed at least a cycle of studies in our Country.

In the evening of our meeting there was voting in the hall of Montecitorio up to 11 p.m. for the reformation of the Senate and, precisely due to this institutional commitment, several among the honourable parliamentarians who were invited and who had assured their presence, could not come. Nevertheless, there were two parliamentar-

would have participated, nor how we would face the financial aspect. In the end we had a surplus which allowed us to help also the gen3 olympics that would take place in the succeeding days. We were a small group of 50 people, but the presence of Jesus in our midst was strong. Only His presence can explain the fruits and the prospects that were opened to us!».

Carla Cotignoli



ians present, Vanna Iori (PD) and Milena Santerini (Per l'Italia), who are among the writers who drafted the proposal for law regarding this topic.

Aside from them, around ten people of the Work Site and some from the Mpu, were also present; two university professors took part in the meeting invited by the honourable parliamentarians themselves, one of them came from the Lumsa of Roma and the other from the University of Salento.

It was an interesting Seminar due to the qualified contributions and the important experiences given by some members of the Opera that we had invited, among whom was a married folklorina from Congo, a cultural mediator, who has been in Italy for 32 years, a girl from Rwanda studying in the university, who has been in Italy with her entire family since she was six months old, and a psychologist working at the headquarters of the AFN of Rome (Action for New Families-international adoptions).

The two university professors present and also two of our experts who gave qualified reports asked explicitly for the Seminar to be repeated soon in their Universities or in their cities.

The parliamentarians asked us for the texts and the materials relative to the interventions, to make them the object of study in the headquarters of the Commission in Congress, because the design of the law in this regard will be discussed soon for approval. This gave us an opportunity to continue to maintain precious

personal relationships and to build new ones with the parliamentarians, giving us the possibility of influencing the work of the Institutions in favour of intercultural acceptance, at the service of the common good and of real needs.

For us belonging to the Work Site it was a new occasion to tighten the «knots» of the networks on the national level and to experience and to give the competence, the human riches and the professional training of many members of the Opera illuminated by the Ideal; but above all it was a confirmation of how much «impact» and «power» our «presenting ourselves together and suitably prepared, with Jesus in the midst can have!».

We experience that this reality helps us to be on the level of the topics that we have to face, the historical and political moments of our Country and it gives us the language to be able to dialogue with people of cultures that are at times very different from ours, giving the values of the Ideal without compromises.

Città Nuova, present at the Workshop, will draw out from our seminar a follow-up on this theme, that will be published in one of the coming issues of the magazine.

We are aware how it is becoming all the more important to act in synergy among us, extending our network and tightening the existing knots, and of how timely it is to establish operational links also with the other work sites of Project Italy.

Patrizia Bertoncello, Stefano Serratore



Here are the telegrams sent by Emmaus for the latest focolarini and focolarine who have reached the Heavenly Mariapoli and some other profiles of intern members of the Opera. Those that we will not be able to reprint due to lack of space can be found on Mariapolis online

Jean-Pierre Mukoko

*An unbreakable faith
in God-Love*

Jean-Pierre, married focolarino from Congo, who has been living in Nantes (France) for 8 years due to health reasons, left unexpectedly for Heaven on February 2. He was born in 1954 in Kinshasa, in the Democratic Republic of Congo, and he met God through the Focolare Movement in '73, even before the focolare center arrived. In spite of the difficulties he experienced including persecution, he remained faithful to his choice of God-Love.

Nestorine, his wife, became involved in this life too and the Mukoko-Ntemo couple, through their witness as true Christians and as a united family, soon gave life to a vast movement of the New Families all over the Country. Anna Maria and Danilo Zanzucchi described them as such: «In Congo, they are the ones responsible for the New Families and they support and care for the entire community of the Focolare».

Papà Jean-Pierre, as he was called within the Movement, with his sense of humour and a profound sense of justice, became a true builder of peace and joy. He was able to resolve so many situations of suffering and countless problems.

He was an artist, the director of the National Theatre of Kinshasa, where he presented important plays, at times facing risks and even being interrogated by the police. For a period of time he was also an adviser at the Ministry of Culture. During the years of the civil war in Kinshasa he started a group of actors, to which Chiara gave the name «Love wins», thus realizing a programme of evangelization through theatrical plays based on the Gospel. At the same time he actively took charge of the catechesis in his parish since the '70s.



Jean-Pierre was immensely happy for the arrival of the men's focolare in 2004. And thanks to him the focolarini were able to penetrate the Congolese cultural richness, also through his theatrical performances.

In 2006, he had to go and live in France to undergo medical treatment for his diseased heart, while Nestorine remained with the children in Kinshasa.

During this lengthy period Jean-Pierre, suffered from his illness and solitude, but through the help of Jesus in the midst with the focolare, the community and members of his family, he entrusted everything to God with the faith of a child of the Gospel.

Jean-Pierre and Nestorine maintained a strong unity among them. Everyday for many years, they would call each other on the telephone, continuing to share their life and to make decisions together. The bureaucratic paperwork needed to allow the family to be reunited took four years, and in the meantime Jean-Pierre's health gradually declined.

Just the same, he found the strength to love his brothers and sisters in Congo and to transmit the Ideal of Chiara, no longer through theatrical plays, but through the creation of the website «FOCOLARICONGO» which he started with his Congolese friend, for all the members of the Movement in Congo and outside, which even from the hospital and with great determination, he was able to update every month.

After finally obtaining their visas, Nestorine and their two youngest children arrived in Nantes six weeks ago. The family was finally reunited.

The Word of Life that Chiara had given him is: «He remained faithful» (2 Tm 2,13).

In '96 he had written to Chiara: «The collective spirituality, this new bomb, is a great discov-

ery and a great treasure for me and for my family. Thank you!».

During my trip to Fontem he wrote me: «Africa is the continent of Jesus Forsaken par excellence. I live each day his many faces of wars, conflicts and the difficulties of daily life... and I promise you that, inspite of the precariety of my health, I would like to be of help to work for the coming of the African "sun"».

Thinking of him immersed in the Light, let us pray for Jean-Pierre and entrust Nestorine and her family to Mary.

Graziella Blasi Piazzini

The enchantment of the vocation

On February 18, while she was preparing to attend the celebration of Ash Wednesday, Graziella, married forcolarina of the early times of Osimo (ancona) left for Paradise at 90 years old. Her funeral at the Cathedral of Osimo was a real celebration, with songs and the moving gratitude of her grandchildren and family.

I will send you the profile prepared for the occasion, to bear witness to her totalitarian choice of God and her faithfulness to Jesus Forsaken, which has marked her life in a special way.

Her unity with Chiara was constant. Beautiful and actual are the words she wrote in '79: *"Every morning as I receive Jesus in the Eucharist I thought that it was the most important moment of my day (and this is also true!)... But in these days I understood in a very strong and new way that I can solemnly meet Him in every person that passes me by"*.

Entrusting her children: Diana, Claudio and Lidia Francesca with their families, to the Madonna's love, united in the Pact and grateful for her example, let's pray for her.

It was just three months before her wedding to Vittorio when Graziella met the Movement. She was deeply impressed that she immediately placed her life at the service of the Charism.

A year later her first daughter was born: «It was then that my calvary started – she related – a bad infection from the birth, which brought on a high fever, forced me to stay in bed for many days ...».

After more than ten days of being confined in hospitals in various cities in Italy and five surgical interventions, she went back to her city, and there she found a group of people living the Ideal. Graziella had a fire within that contaminated everyone, ready to share her experiences and the gifts that God gave her. «In my living room – she wrote – there were continuous meetings that were rich in meaning and filled with true enthusiasm.

The house was always full of young people, who were thirsting for God and who wanted to know Him. Some of them are now in the focolare».

The Ideal continued to spread. Her living room was no longer big enough, and so Graziella collaborated with the others in Osimo to organize the meetings in some of the hotels of Loreto (Ancona).

During Christmas '63, Chiara announced the opening of the focolare center in the Marche region. «We made a competition to furnish it and to make it as beautiful as possible – she said – giving up some of our own things; and we were very happy».

Her unity with Chiara was constant. Graziella asked her for a phrase from the Gospel as a guide for her life and Chiara chose for her: «And from that moment on the disciple took her with him» (Jn. 19,25). Thus she consecrated herself to God, as she herself wrote: «I finally became a member of the Work of Mary, in the closest way possible, as a married forcolarina. It was my dream». And still further she wrote: «Jesus Forsaken, my one and Only, was waiting for me. I became seriously sick so that I had to stop going to the focolare, but the "Life" continued to be born everywhere».

Throughout the years Graziella maintained a frequent correspondence with Chiara, with the first forcolarine and with Iginio Giordani.

Graziella's soul was always open wide towards vast horizons. She wrote to Chiara: «Now as never before, with the eyes of the soul I have



understood the meaning of my vocation, which is something not only for me, but I have to be open to humanity and to that universal brotherhood for which you are spending every breath and every moment of your life».

In this last period she experienced a moment of trial: «For some time now I have been passing through a moment of intense darkness, with some clear skies, with sufferings that grind my soul. But the Omnipotent One reminds me that I must not interrupt my dialogue with Jesus Forsaken, who has always been my peace, my joy and ... my resurrection.

He reminds me that I must go back and contemplate him with that initial intensity, but always new, up to the point of becoming Him, only Him». «According to my Word of Life – she wrote in another passage – I ask Mary to make my love for the abandoned Love grow more and more... until I can meet Him in Paradise, together with everyone, in that paradise, just as the poet Dante Alighieri said, “where one can be what one desires”».

Let us think of her now in that Paradise, having finally arrived in the arms of that God Love to whom she has remained faithful up to the end.

d. Virgilio Zuffada

«I made myself all things to everyone»

Fr. Virgilio Zuffada, priest focolarino of Italy was born in Nibbiano (Piacenza) on November 2, 1936. After serving in different parishes, in '67 he left for Brazil as a priest *fidei donum* where he remained until 1974. Before leaving, his companion missionary invited him to a meeting at the Center of the Movement wherein Chiara would have shared the theme: The passion for the Church. Fr.



Virgilio was deeply touched by those words that will later guide his life and his mission to unity forever. In Brazil he looked for other priests of the Movement, but it was when he came back to Italy that the Ideal became to true motor of his life and pushed him to become a witness to it. The soul of Fr. Virgilio became always more attentive to that which God was asking him, especially in his being open to others, to every neighbour, whom he constantly recognized as a brother, and helped by the Word of life that Chiara has chosen for him: «I made myself all things to everyone for the Gospel, so as to gain someone » (1Cor 9, 21). Fr. Virgilio lived in an exemplary way that profoundmaking himself one with the others so as to bring the Gospel to everyone.

In communion with his brother priests of the Focolare his residence was always open to welcome persons of the most diverse and varied demands and needs. Some of them, coming from a life that was rather adventurous and troubled,

decided to walk in the right path towards good. The tension to unity pushed him to build fraternal relationships with all the priests of the diocese offering to some of them the chance to live in community in his own residence. Even in the social context, he gave his contribution, participating in the founding of the chapter in Piacenza of the “Iginio Giordani Center” for the promotion of the culture of unity. He was the author of different books of poetry

that he wrote as a way to evangelize, new messages to build relationships with people of different cultures.

He was always ready to say a total and generous yes to the various invitations and proposals of the Bishop; among his many pastoral experiences he was also the chaplain of the hospital and person responsible in the diocesan for pastoral health care. The sufferings he encountered in many neighbours made him very sensitive in listening and in participating in their difficulties. And when he became ill himself, he became a sick person among the sick. Like Jesus, Fr. Virgilio knew how to entrust himself to the love of the Father. He often repeated: «You want it, I want it too». With this interior attitude, in the midst of suffering, Fr. Virgilio walked in the light, giving it also to those, who like him were living the times of pruning. In a letter dated July 2013 he wrote: «In the past months I thought of bringing, with the word of God and with my life,

the new evangelization in the valley. Instead with the unexpected decline of my health I became nothing, an unstable person, confused and in the hospitals of Parma and Piacenza I understood that I had to forget myself so as to make myself one with the sick, the nurses, my family members, the doctors». «I feel the urgency to bring God above all "through contamination" everywhere that I go... without forgetting to teach and to put into practice the Word of Life and to nourish myself with the Eucharist. The relationship with God is continuous and it is the greatest grace that I have ever received in my life. Prayer is frequent like the

breath of my soul. In these months I have become a part of the family of the sick. I discovered how precious the gift of good health is, in the same way that this illness is the great occasion to offer myself to Jesus, and to gratefully receive the help of my brother priests».

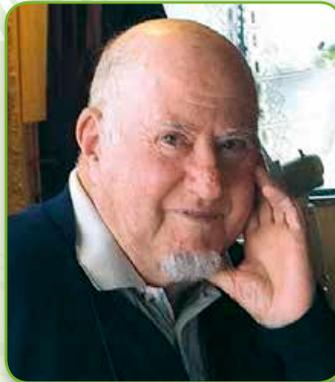
At the beginning of this year, renewing his joyous and full yes, with his gaze fixed on Jesus in the Eucharist he repeated: «How beautiful it would be if Jesus could say of us too, all united in His name: "This is my Body!"». He left peacefully for Heaven on January 15, 2015.

Antonio Olivero

Doretto Cervia

«Trust in me, I have won the world»

Always ready to grasp and perceive the value of the great novelty of the moment, in 1967 Doretto was one of the first to embrace the



Ideal and to work for its diffusion in La Spezia. Soon everyone in his department (he was an employee of the Oto Melara) were conquered by this new evangelical proposal and taking advantage of the lunch break, they started to meet to share their experiences which to their surprise they were starting to make. Gradually the group continued to grow and Chiara, when she came to know about this new spiritual boost that was born within a company that produces weapons of war, wanted to get to know them personally. And so around thirty of them arrived in Rocca di papa. It was a historical moment. There was much emotion and hesitation in speaking, but Chiara encouraged them, she asked them questions and listened to them with great interest. They shared with her how Jesus in the midst was changing their lives and the atmosphere in the establishment. At the conclusion, she expressed her appreciation for such an extraordinary experience in which she saw the foretaste of what would then become the New Humanity Movement. She gave the the Word of life: «Trust in me, I have won the world», personally writing it with the dedication: «To those of the Oto Melara».

Doretto felt the call to become a Volunteer and his life becomes more and more filled with momentum and enthusiasm. But what made him shift to the «fourth gear» was the discovery of an illness that forced him to use a wheelchair. He understood that he was once again faced with a project of love and his «yes» to this

new will of God gave him an uncontainable joy that he wanted to share with everyone. He collaborated in the interparish bulletin *// Sentiero*, which published his touching experiences fruits of his love for Jesus Forsaken and his particular sensitivity in consoling and enlightening the sufferings of the others.

It was becoming more and more difficult for him to participate in his nucleo meetings, but the men Volunteers often went to visit him, and also the focolarini of Genoa came too. Doretto could no longer use his legs, but «he grew wings...». He said that it didn't matter if he would not get well, because he had found a cure that was more important, that of the soul. In the final moments he made giant steps forward, supporting even his wife Marta, who accompanied him with dedication and courage in the many difficult moments.

Doretto left us on October 24. Three days before, while the Assembly of the men Volunteers was ongoing, he telephoned them to say that he was going to the hospital. He didn't ask for prayers for his recovery «so that I may do the will of God well and with joy».

Giorgio Martelli (Turnea) con il Centro dei Volontari



Agnese Salizzoni Rizzoli

At the beginnings of the focolare

Agnes, sister of Aletta Salizzoni, one of the first

focolarine, serenely reached the house of the Father at 88 years old. She had a crystalline faith, and she was ten years old when a neighbour whom she encountered along the stairs took her head between his hands and angrily lifted her in the air in hatred for her faith, as she felt proud of having to suffer in this way out of love for Jesus. Agnes got to know Chiara and her first companions in the air raid shelters near Piazza Cappuccini, in Trent in 1944. Aletta related: «fascinated by their contagious joy joy, she shared with me her feelings, but I don't remember if she told me about their ideals. So, since I didn't know almost anything about it, every time my sister invited me to go to them I told her "You go"». Agnes then became one of the four or five girls who would meet at Martignano, in the stable of their father, to read together the letters that Chiara wrote them. She was an active part of the first core group of young people around Chiara whom she called «Fiore». Attracted to the focolare, it was Chiara herself who encouraged her to get married to Lorenzo whom Agnes already knew; they had five children and she spent her life in the family as an exemplary wife and mother, formed by the light that Chiara shared to her as a young girl, which she never forgot nor betrayed.

On the day of Chiara's funeral, Agnes reminded Aletta of meaningful a fact that happened in '45: «I was walking up towards Martignano and I met five or six "pope" with Chiara, along a small path with steps leading to Piazza dei Cappuccini. We stayed together for a time. On those steps, we listened to Chiara who in those sad days of the war was widening our hearts and who told us: "We are made to go to heaven and, when our time will come, Jesus will welcome us with open arms!"». Before leaving for her journey to heaven, on January 5, Agnes whispered to her children: «*Voléve ben*, love one another».

Maria Treu

José Maria Cortez Marques

A generous heart open to humanity

On June 5, José Maria, from Braga (Portugal) reached Heaven. He was 86 years old and, during the Sixties he was one of the pioneers of the Ideal in Portugal and one of the first Volunteers of the zone.

An Architect by profession, he also worked as a teacher and a real estate agent. His life as a lay person always faithful to the Church and to the charism of unity, even as he experienced peaks of abandonment and resurrection, produced many visible fruits in the community of the Opera in Braga. He was insightful and free, and he was able to always share his thoughts on certain situations and the challenges he had to face with detachment. He also knew how to express profound friendship that came from his generous heart that was open to humanity.

Married to Adriana, they had seven children and numerous grandchildren. Many of whom participate in the life of the Opera in various ways. In his house everyone felt welcomed by an extraordinary atmosphere of the family. He strived to remain useful by working until, at the age of 81, his health declined. As the years passed, one could notice that he grew in humility, that allowed him to accept the contradictions with meekness and to appreciate the actions of the others, even if they were apparently trivial.

In the last period of his life, during almost a month spent in the hospital, aside for experiencing pain he also experienced the love of God. This atmosphere touched many, including the doctors, nurses, assistants... They told us: «I have never seen a family that is so united and peaceful even in these circumstances; it is not common to see a sick elderly person who is accompanied for a long period in this



Jessica Pisauri

At the service of the diocese

Jessica never held back anything. Even as a child her mother would entrust her with her younger siblings certain that she could be trusted.

At 14 years old she met the Ideal. She started to participate in the camps organized by the Diocesan Movement in the province of Macerata – where she lived - and she was especially active: there she learned how to grow in her relationship with Jesus through the spirituality of unity. Thanks to her, her siblings also met the Ideal. She understood her vocation which was to become a committed member of the Diocesan Movement. This meant to give herself to God in the Opera, serving the Church and the Diocese.

In 2002 she married Roberto. Lorenzo and Luca were born. With a degree in Philosophy and a clear ability in teaching, she is impeccable in the positions that the principal entrusted to her, respected by her colleagues, loved by her students, who would all come to visit her when her illness manifested itself in 2009. Undergoing emergency surgery, it seemed as if everything was resolved, instead it was just the beginning of her calvary. A chain of prayer was started for this young mother, who faced painful events with dignity, always tending towards living the present moment.

As the preparations began for the first Communion of Lorenzo, Jessica felt a progressive paralysis of the arms and then the legs, which forced her into a wheelchair. The community continued to ask for a miracle. It is a very difficult moment. In the end there was the miracle: from desperation Jessica passed on to love, with an unconditional embrace of Jesus Forsaken and, walking by now in the light, like a hot air balloon she began

way and cared for with so much love». A young nurse movingly confided to us that, after getting to know our family, she now wanted to have children, while before she thought of not having any.

Tobé Vieira de Oliveira



gan to detach herself from the earth. She continued to make decisions together with Roberto for the family; her children would do their homework in the room with her, who was becoming more and more like a living crucifix. Jesus in the Eucharist, whom she received everyday, was her strength and her peace. The parish priest, set a day to celebrate Mass in her room. Jessica requested all the people who are linked to her and

the other members, to come with a guitar. It was a moment of Paradise. At the conclusion there was also the telephone call from the two Delegates of the Opera in the zone: Maria and Antonio.

From that day onwards an extraordinary strength accompanied her up to the end, as she offered everything for the Opera, for the meeting of the youth of the Parish and Diocesan Movements that was taking place in Benevento. She left this earth at the age of 39, on August 10, 2014. During the funeral Mass the reading from the Apocalypse was: «Here is the Holy City, the holy Jerusalem, ready like a bride...»

Maria Palladini

Our relatives

The following passed on to the Next Life: **Agnese and Giuseppina, sisters of Aletta Salizzoni**, focolarina of the early times; **Violette, mother of Margaret**, focolarina at the Center of the Opera and of **Anna Maria Karram**, Volunteer in Haifa; **the mother of Marcellus Nkafu Nkeze** focolarino in Burundi; **Maria, mother of Ionella Tomasello**, focolarina at the Roman Mariapolis; **Min Iek, father of Mariana Chan**, focolarina in Hong Kong; **Boniface, father of Agnes Marie Keuho**, focolarina in Douala; **Anna, sister of Francesca Bucalo**, focolarina in Catania; **Teresa, mother of Remedios (Reme) Selva**, focolarina in Loppiano; **Yolanda, sister of Maritza Vasquez**, focolarina in the Little Town of Luminosa; **Maria, mother of Donatella Cardaci and Vincenzo, father of Rita Gentile**, married focolarine in Roma; **Eichici, father of Mitsuko Nawano**, focolarina in Tokyo.

MARCH 2015
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Ai sensi del D. lgs. N. 196/2003 per la tutela dei dati personali, comunichiamo che gli indirizzi dei nominativi a cui viene inviato Mariapoli fanno parte dell'archivio del Notiziario Mariapoli, gestito da PAFOM, esclusivamente per la finalità dell'invio di tale periodico. I dati possono essere comunicati a terzi incaricati per la spedizione.