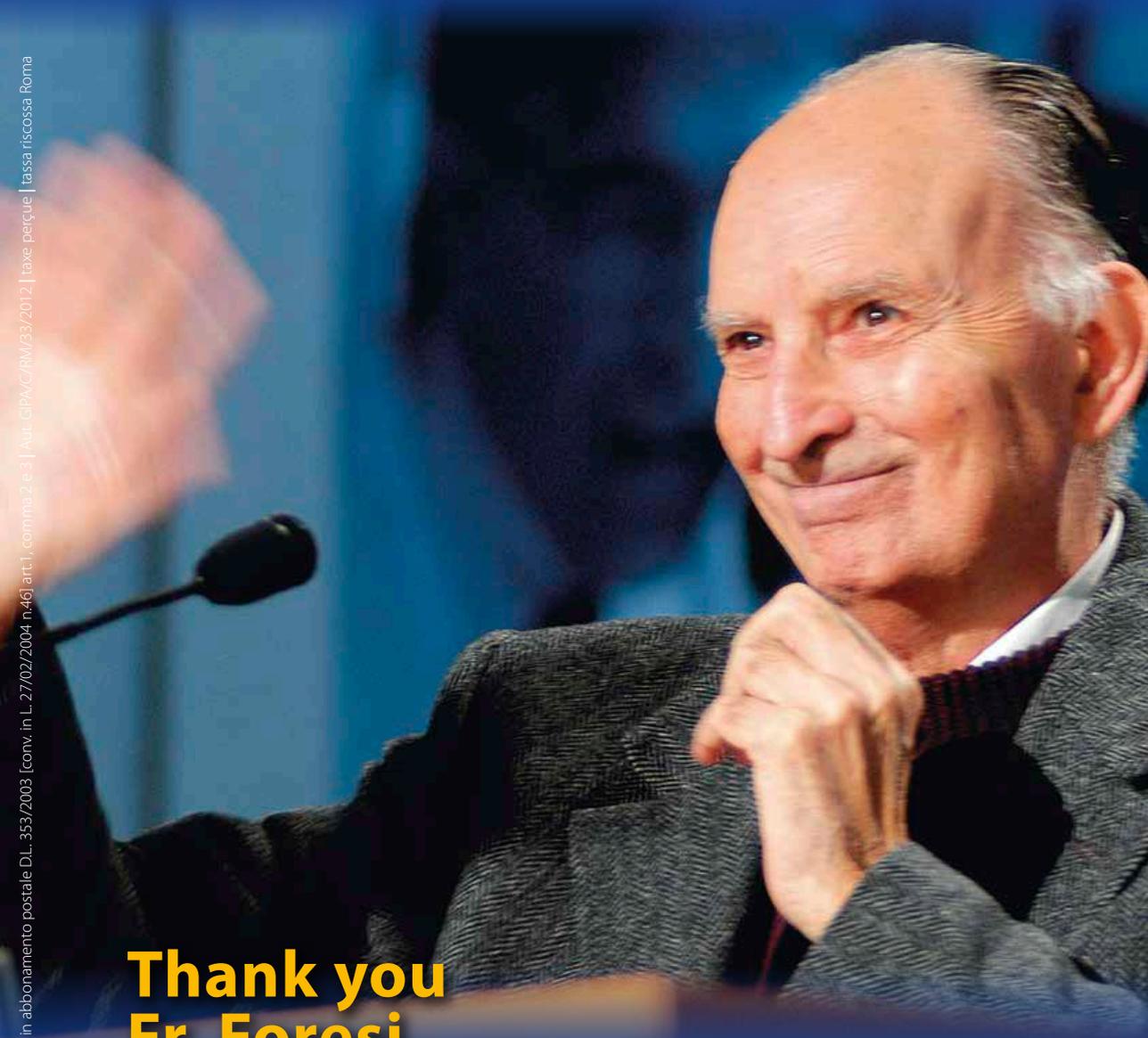


YEAR XXXII N 06/07 JUNE JULY 2015

# MARIAPOLI

Newsletter of the focolare movement

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## Thank you Fr. Foresi

*Cofounder  
of the Opera  
with Chiara  
and Iginio Giordani*

**Nairobi**  
The contribution  
of Africa  
to the Economy  
of Communion

**Big Zone  
of Europe**  
Stages  
of the new  
set-up

# I in them

«Father, I want those you have given me to be with me where I am, and to see my glory, the glory you have given me because you loved me before the creation of the world. Righteous Father, though the world does not know you, I know you, and they know that you have sent me. I have made you known to them, and will continue to make you known in order that the love you have for me may be in them and that I myself may be in them» (Jn 17,24-26).

Jesus seems to come to the point of his discourse. His heart is full and wanting. «I want» he in fact says and not «I pray» as if for the one before him.

*I want*: is the desire of love. The desire which has its small echo in the «I want» of the saints, like in the letters of St. Catherine. The desire of someone who is more than convinced of asking only for things are liked by the one being asked from, to whom one prays and is convinced of asking for great things.

*He wants to give us heaven.* He had just given us all of himself in the Eucharist and maybe that «I in them and you in me» could mean: I, all my being, body, blood, soul and divinity in them so as to divinize them, to incorporate them definitively.

It is not for nothing that the Eucharist is the bond of unity. «I in them» so as in this way to give them eternal life, fruit of the Eucharist, that eternal life which he speaks of also in this testament, which is: to know Jesus and the Father.

«*And you in me*», this is evident.

*Chiara*

From the *Diary* of July 22, 1970 published in CHIARA LUBICH *Jesus Eucharist* edited by Fabio Ciardi, Città Nuova, Rome 2014, pp. 67-68



Rocca di Papa, 13 dicembre 1976. Da sinistra: Igino Giordani, Chiara Lubich, don Pasquale Foresi

Maybe this is a piece of the testament that has amazed me the most as soon as I read it.

Never, never on this earth has there ever been something similar.

The angel that brought a message from heaven to Mary enchants. But here it is not an angel who speaks: it is God, the second Person, who speaks to the Father. It is a voice, a divine link between heaven and earth, but so dense, so full, that maybe, never before as in this case, is it evident that the word of God contains his reality.

# And the light that you gave me...

In the final farewell to Fr. Pasquale Foresi (Chiaretto) an ample profile from several people was presented which you will find in its entirety in Mariapoli online.

Here are some excerpts

## The meeting with Chiara

The year 1949. On the occasion of the Christmas festivities Pasquale Foresi was invited to spend some days in Trent, together with some young people from Rome. It was the occasion for him to meet Chiara Lubich personally. «The encounter with Chiara on the morning of December 31 left me stunned – he shared afterwards. Listening to her speak, one understood that she was a soul totally taken by God». During a dinner in Casetta Foco, above piazza Cappuccini, Chiara Lubich shared what happened during the summer of 49.

«I still have in front of me, today just as it was then, the eyes of Pasquale. I was so impressed that I stopped for a moment to look at him: it was not just enchantment, but rather I think it was more of contemplation. In those eyes were the same light of that “Paradise” that Chiara was giving us and I saw in that moment that it was different from all of us. I always thought that it was then, that his “design of God” and his “Word of Life” were born, both of which he fully realized throughout his entire life. The phrase of the Gospel that Chiara chose for him, which is his “Word of life”, as it was called, was: “And the Light



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(Chiara Lubich, Answers to the questions of the focolarini and the focolarine, Rocca di Papa May 3, 1972)

that you gave me, I gave to them so that they may be one just as you and I”. It is precisely for this reason that from that moment on we have always called him “Chiaretto”». (Palmira Frizzera)

«The light that Chiara was giving us resolved all his personal problems at their roots, so much so that he felt the call to become a focolarino and to follow Jesus in this new way. That evening was truly for Pasquale a real Christmas. Leaving Trent, he passed by Pistoia to gather only what he needed and to continue on to Rome where he was welcomed by one of the families of the Movement. The only thing that interested him was to be close to Chiara so as to absorb the light that had fascinated him so much». (Marco Tecilla)

## The first focolarino priest

At a certain point Fr. Foresi felt that God was asking him “You must become a priest”. «The priestly vocation was so strong in me – he would share years later – because I had to be the first focolarino priest so as to open the way also for others».

«He taught us with his life the possibility of being “totally Church and totally Opera”: to



occupy ourselves with the things of the Father and to be submissive to Mary and Joseph in Nazareth like Jesus. Fr. Foresi taught us with his words and his example to live the priestly ministry in full unity with the Pope and our bishops, sowing the life of communion among our brother priests and among the members of the people of God. (Fr. Antonio Bacelar)

«As a builder of bridges, Fr. Foresi made the Movement present in the Church, and the Church to the Movement, in their reciprocal otherness. His ability to grasp and express with great clarity – from the very beginning – the novelty of the Charism and to know how to understand at the same time that which in the Church was possible from time to time, here and now, was an incalculable contribution. The intuition of “contextualizing” the Charism of the Ideal, on one hand with the Council and on the other with the thoughts of the Fathers of the Church, was an inspired discovery that paved the way for a greater ecclesial impact of the Charism. Not to mention all the relationships built, with wisdom and patience, on the Church level, especially in the events of the ‘50s and ‘60s... And I would also like to underline his ability to read “within” the religious, social and cultural scenarios of humanity and to project on them the Light of Chiara, helping us to grasp the vast importance of the Charism» (Fr. Hubertus Blaumeiser)

## On earth as it is in heaven

«Chiaretto’s design came into evidence later. Chiaretto had to be preceded by Foco because the Paradise we had seen, which indicated the design of the Movement as well, was truly in the bosom of the Trinity. So the Trinity remained the Trinity, but that small group which was the Movement was inside the Trinity, and that design which we had seen had to be incarnated, embodied on earth. Chiaretto’s role, his charism was to bring all these realities down to earth. In fact, he tells that when I said: “Now Chiaretto’s design will emerge”, and he made the pact with me as Foco had done, he asked: “Chiara, what emerged?” “The concretiza-



Loppiano, 29 octobre 2004. Inauguration and dedication of the Shrine of Maria Theotokos



Loppiano, 10 may 1969. The blessing of the land where the College will be built

tion, I said, Paradise comes on earth.” Chiaretto was almost disappointed because he was so enchanted by the contemplation of Paradise that it’s concretization seemed to him to be of little importance. Instead, heaven help us if we didn’t concretized things. So Chiaretto’s design is the concretization». (Chiara to the focolarini of the school Loppiano, 13/05/2003)

**Loppiano is born.** «I remember the moment when he returned from Loppiano where he had gone to sell the land inherited by Eletto Folonari. He was radiant. He was bringing a dream of Chiara. He had a proposal and he said to Chiara: “We



At the Gen School of Grottaferrata in 1976





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won't sell it: but let's try to bring the schools of formation there". The Rome-Florence highway will be passing near it...» (Gabri Fallacara)

**Città Nuova.** «The Città Nuova Publishing House, considered by Chiara as the first work of the Opera, owes its birth and development to Fr. Foresi. He lends his intelligence to it, his philosophical preparation, his knowledge of the history of the Church and of theology. In 1955 Chiara announced to the focolarini of Rome that a magazine will be born, kept alive by the love among the editors and the small community of the Movement. On July 14, 1956, in the heart of the Mariapolis of Fiera di Primiero, the first issue of **Città Nuova** was printed. Fr. Foresi would follow the life of the magazine almost daily for more than ten years. In August of '59, still during the Mariapolis, the volume **Meditations** was published. At the end of '59 the volume **Experiences**, which is a collection of testimonies on the Gospel lived, was published. It was followed in March '60 by the book of Giordani entitled **The Social Message of Christianity**. The unexpected diffusion of these first three books made Fr. Foresi say: "So now the Publishing House can be born!". Fr. Foresi

was, for many years, the real Editorial Director, choosing the volumes of a theological and scriptural character and writing his first books.

(Giannino Dadda)

**Sophia University Institute.** «The love that has God as its source shows, among other things, this quality: one who is the first to love. This is how the relationship of Chiaretto was with Sophia: he was the first to love. Even before Sophia began its activity, Fr. Foresi, with enthusiasm and generosity, wished to give his personal library as a gift: a jewel, built with passion and foresight throughout the years, containing books of great value and interest. Thus it was spontaneous, for Sophia, to dedicate the newly born library to him. It was a joy for all of us, to see the joy in his face when he was able to visit Sophia. It was as if his soul, burning with Light, would radiate forth from his eyes and envelope us with his love». (Piero Coda)

And finally a significant element: his burial took place in the chapel of the Center of the Opera where Chiara Lubich and Iginio Giordani are also buried.

*prepared by the editorial board*



# In Trent

## At the roots of the Ideal

### The annual retreat of the General Council

The choice to hold the annual retreat in Trent was not by chance. The reasons are many. From having realized that many of the Counselors have never visited Trent, the places where everything started, to the exquisite readiness of the Mariapolis Center of Cadine to host the event. A structure situated just a little above Trent, with its characteristic style influenced by the Charism of unity, it gives the sensation that Chiara herself is there to welcome and accompany them along her own footsteps.

For all the 67 members of the General Council, belonging to the different vocations of the Opera (focolarini, focolarine, women and men Volunteers, men and women religious, priests), the week of May 4 to 10 «was an immersion in the first times of the Ideal – the central delegates Friederike Koller and Angel Bartol, moderators of the meeting wrote – because of the very lively testimonies of some of the pioneers such as Fr. Bonaventura Marinelli and Maria Maffei, an adherent, and also due to the tour of the city, from Piazza Cappuccini to the forest of *Gocciadoro*». Places which, just by saying their names bring us back to the points of light in the story of Chiara: the church of *Maria Bambina* where as a child she would go for the adoration of the Blessed Sacrament; the



night of «stars and tears» (*Gocciadoro*) where her choice to remain in the city after a terrible bombardment was formed; the church of St. Claire, where she had asked the Father for a pair of size 42 shoes; the «*casetta*» (little house) of Piazza Cappuccini where the poor, sitting alternately with the focolarine, found a hot meal served with the best crockery; the dark cellar, which still exists today under the house of Natalia Dallapiccola – which is entered through a trapdoor – wherein Chiara and her first companions, reading the Gospel by the light of a candle, read for the first time that testament of Jesus: «Father, may all men be one». (*Jn 17,21*)

«The day then spent in Tonadico and Fiera di Primiero – Friederike and Angel continued – brought us back to the contemplation of the experience of light of '49, sur-



The meeting with Fr. Bonaventura Marinelli

rounded by the splendid nature and a clear and blue sky that was unusual for the season». To accompany the Counselors in the valley of Primiero some passages of Chiara were chosen *ad hoc* for the various places visited. The very first place was the church of the Capucins where, following the pact with Foco, the extraordinary series of intellectual visions on Paradise and on the Opera, that continued for months on end, began for Chiara. The emotion was unforgettable during the visit to the *baita Paradiso* (mountain cabin) and from there to admire the sunset behind the mountain peaks which that evening also shot forth lightning-swift rays: an image of which Chiara used in '49 to explain to the focolarine something that she had seen in Paradise: the splendour of the Father and the manifestation of the Verb. «A grace – commented Friederike and Angel – that reached all of us».

Also included in the programme were the meeting with the mayor Andreatta, the Eucharist celebrated by the bishop Mons. Bressan and the meeting-celebration with the community of Trent wherein what was evident was its great vitality on the political, educational, social and ecclesial levels.

In this atmosphere of profound communion, the work that was planned ahead of

time was also done, since this was a retreat of a representation of the whole Opera: to reflect on its identity and on its «going out», also in the light of what has been established in the final document of the Assembly 2014. Stimulating proposals emerged from the working groups which, expressed during the plenary sessions, became interesting paths to pursue. This work will continue through the appropriate Commissions to be created at the Center, and then to continue further during the meeting in September of the Delegates of the Zones.

At the conclusion of the retreat Emmaus said: «*Our identity is Chiara, it is Mary,*



*it is to be a living Gospel, it is to be bringers of Jesus to the world. We must find the way to realize this, to understand how to express what we are, until it becomes understandable today».* Jesús added: «*Actualization means to bring up to date something that already exists, in order to see it better, to understand it better».*

Regarding «going out» the co-president underlined that: «*When the Pope talks of "going out" he is not inventing something new because the Church started to "go out" during Pentecost. He simply wants to give a new missionary impetus. It is the same also for us: "going out" is not a new operation, but it means to intensify that which is already in our DNA».* Emmaus confirmed: «*"Going out" is inherent in the Ideal, it is inherent in the Charism».*

*prepared by Anna Friso*

Nairobi 2015

# The Yes of Africa to the Economy of Communion

**At the Mariapolis Piero the fifth international Congress of the EoC,  
preceded by a school dedicated to the youth**

In Nairobi (Kenya) two important appointments were held in May for the Economy of Communion (EoC) in Africa; a School with 168 youth, of which 150 were from the African continent, and a succeeding Congress with the participation of more than 350 people, including the youth of the School, coming from 40 nations of the 5 continents, of which 15 were African countries.

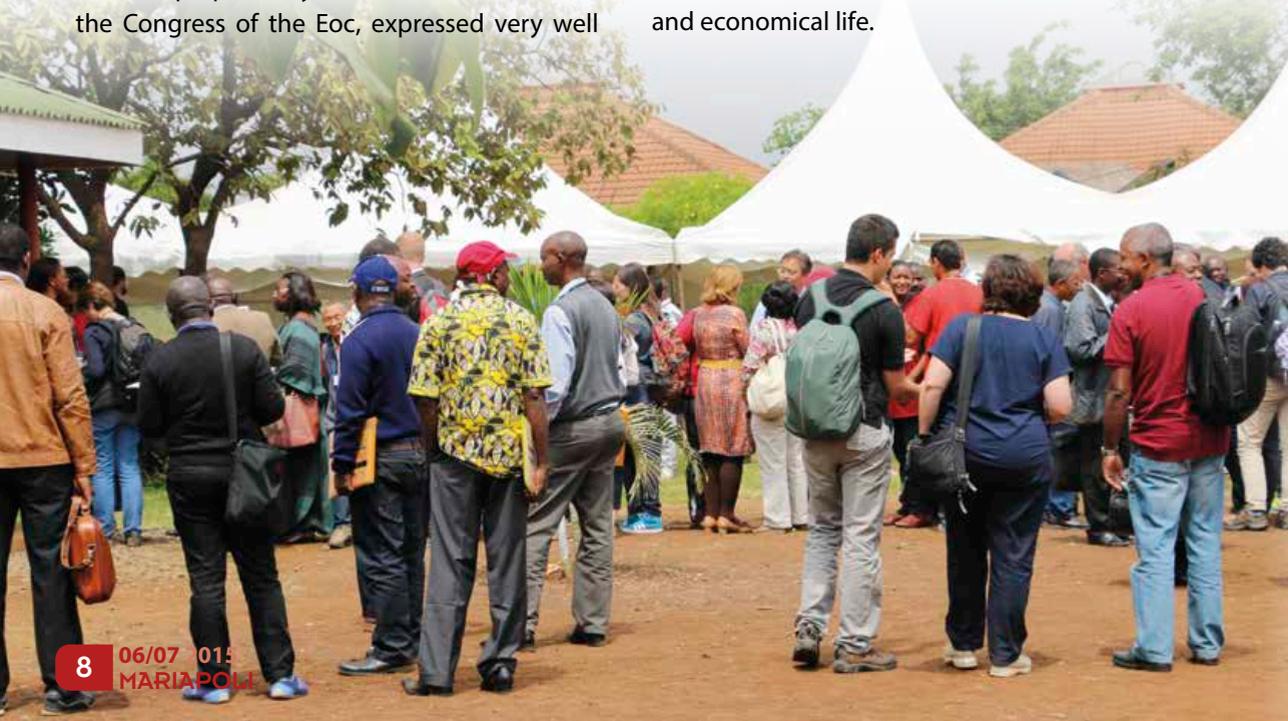
Here is what Luigino Bruni, Italian, a member of the central commission of the Economy of Communion and Geneviève Sanze, from the Republic of Central Africa, and counselor at the Center for the aspect of Economy and Work relate.

## **The civilization of the hundredfold**

This phrase, that we heard again and again in the very beautiful video on the life of Piero Pasolini, prepared by the Little Town Piero for the Congress of the Eoc, expressed very well



the ten days lived in Nairobi. Piero recalled that when Fontem was born, Chiara Lubich wished that in the Little Town what should be concretely visible is not so much the poverty and destitution, but a real and true civilization born from the Beatitudes, from the Gospel lived, where the reality of the hundredfold could become the dominant note also in the social, political and economical life.



# The stuff of dreams becomes a project

Interview with **Geneviève A. M. Sanze**

*How was the Economy of Communion received during the School?*

When the EoC was presented there was an intense listening. One could feel that the African youth discovered and rediscovered the profound values of their culture and saw them in a new light. But there was also some perplexity in them. «Are what they are saying true? Is this not a return of capitalism or communism? We have values that were destroyed by capitalism. Can we trust them now?» Important questions, because they touch on the history of Africa, of which the consequences are still deep and the reason for many challenges. This was important for me and it was also new for me to hear the youth themselves asking these questions. In the profes-



sors coming from all over the world who were participating, I saw how they listened profoundly, with love, and by deeply «making themselves one».

And this was the turning point. The creativity, innovation «generativity», the richness that each one, and Africa as a continent possessed was highlighted. They spoke of communion and of fraternity gathering the beauty and the fecundity of the African culture for the EoC. After two days, the sala became one body. The discovery of the unknown potentiality and resources; the conquest of a new faith in their abilities and the possibility of redemption; the pride for the beauty of one's own personal and collective identity; the concrete possibility revealed by the communion among them: these are the reflections born from those days.

*What was the significance of speaking of economics in Africa and the contribution that Africa can give to humanity?*

It was moving to see how the youth adhered to it and started to work also with the professors. They understood that they are the present and the future of humanity, that they can change the future if they are able to change the present. We had the impression that the raw material with which the School was built were the dreams that each participant shared and developed up to the point of turning them into prophetic but concrete and feasible projects. The collaboration that has begun will continue.

*What are the fruits that these meetings have brought?*

A very concrete fruit of the congress is the birth of two «incubators», one international in Loppiano next summer and the other in Nairobi in January 2017 called «Siobhan». It is a project that matured and was shared with the Pan-African Commission of the EoC, where all the Delegates of the Opera in Africa were present. When we say incubator we mean ten-fifteen days during which the young African entrepreneurs will share with the other entrepreneurs of the EoC, their projects and dreams so as to be able to accompany and follow them.

*And your impression of the congress?*

I think that it was a special event, maybe even we ourselves did not know how flourishing and alive the EoC is! It appeared to us as beautiful and prophetic, but we have never seen our protagonists so charismatic and innovative. We could see the work of God «going out», made for everyone, for «*Ut omnes*». A place where the foundations of the spirituality were lived by all.

*prepared by Anna Lisa Innocenti*

Last year we decided to go to Africa for the fifth international Congress of the EoC. We were attracted by the life, also of the EoC, that was starting and sprouting in Africa, from that time in 2011 when

we held the first Pan-African Congress in Nairobi.

The Congress was preceded by a School. Extraordinary days of hope, work, projects, life, communion, that created the



Nairobi – a question arose in us: how come that here, poverty revealed itself to be above all a wealth? Chiara often reminded us that many

best atmosphere to welcome the others coming from the five continents, on May 27.

What happened in the Mariapolis Piero? A lot, too much to be able to share it in a few words. First of all it was the discovery of Africa on the part of the EoC members from the other countries of the world. Africa revealed a face of riches, creativity, of life, of «generativity», which was much more real and powerful than the poverty and misery that nevertheless continue to exist. The African men and women appeared to us gifted with a profound and extremely radiant beauty.

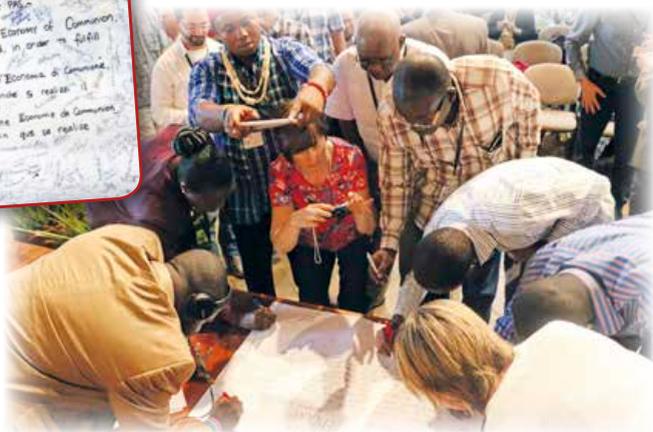
We understood, maybe discovered, that the African EoC will be born from Africa in communion with the whole world: in cannot be a copy of what is being done in Brazil or in France, not an importation of a ready-made model to put into practice. Often these things crush and mortify the creativity, the dignity, the honour of the African people, who have never felt themselves admired as bringers of original values, but rather considered as «baby people», to whom everything must be taught. The EoC never believed in this, but after this Congress the conviction became a method of thought, of action, of development. The first contribution that it can bring to Africa is the sense of admiration for that which Africa is, and not only for what it can and must become.

Finally, during those days of paradise – I believe and I hope that Heaven will be like those offerings given in dance that we lived in

words of the Gospel have a positive and a negative part: «Blessed are the pure of heart» (the negative part) «because they shall see God» (the positive part). And – she added – only by putting together the two parts can we have a full life. But – she also said – if we remove the positive part, we don't have paradise, but hell. During those African days I then understood: poverty is paradise if together with the «blessed are the poor» we also live «because the kingdom of heaven is theirs». And this can become wealth thanks to communion. Poverty is hell when the poor are not able to experience communion with everyone – during the Congress we did not forget that in the world, not only in Africa, there is much poverty-misery that kill and destroy people.

The proof of the truth of those days will lie in our ability to continue the communion that began in Nairobi (among youth and entrepreneurs, for example, who committed themselves to work together with a project of an African youth), if that Kingdom of heaven will grow in our daily struggles. Everyone is poor, everyone is rich. «Blessed are the poor, because theirs is the kingdom of heaven».

*Luigino Bruni*



# To the European Commission

## Living together, accepting the differences

**Maria Voce invited to Brussels, together with other religious leaders, to a high-level meeting on themes of unity and tolerance in Europe**



On June 16 the European Commission (EC) gathered (Belgium) fifteen religious leaders representing the Christian, Jewish, Muslim, Hindu, Buddhist and Mormon communities in Brussels to discuss the theme: «Living together, accepting the differences». Emmaus was also present among them.

*«The contribution that I was able to give I believe came from the thousands of experiences the are lived in the Focolare Movement – Emmaus shared when she was interviewed during the Collegamento CH – because I felt that what those who are in these Institutions strongly desire is to have concrete examples of good practices of living together, because a lot of words are often wasted». Still reflecting on the European Institutions she added: «They are starting to realize that their work is bringing about few fruits, they gain few fruits.. They are coming to realize that something is missing. And I think that this is important: that they realize it and that they search for what is missing in religion, in the religions, in religious principles».*

Antonio Tajani, vice-president of the European Parliament, and Frans Timmermans, first vice-president of the European Commission were present and said among other things: «For me dialogue is not a ritual; it is not something we do once a year and then put back on the shelf again. For me

it is an essential contribution to finding solutions to some of the most difficult problems European societies are facing today, problems linked to fear of what is different, linked to the consequences of the crisis, the need for environmental sustainability. Religions will have to play the role between the communities, to perhaps help us bring Europe in a better place than it is today».

After the debate Emmaus expressed her joy at having participated in a truly free exchange, with an authentic listening wherein she was able to underline the «Golden Rule» which is common to all religions, developing it according to the «art of loving». An intervention enriched by examples of many cities particularly committed to the search for fraternity, experiences that bear witness to the commitment to realize dialogue in daily life, along the streets and in the neighborhoods of our cities, throughout the whole year.

The conclusions of the debate will converge in the discussion material for the first annual Convention on fundamental rights of the European Union that will be held in October 1 and 2, 2015 and will be centered on the theme «Tolerance and respect: to prevent and combat anti-semitic and anti-Muslim hatred in Europe».

*prepared by the editorial board*

## Trip to Belarus and Poland

# «You must be courageous!»

**From May 22 to June 3, 2015, Emmaus Voce and Gesù Morà went to visit the communities of the Focolare Movement present in those nations.**

In Belarus the contacts with the Movement began in the Nineties and now around 80 direct collaborators of the Focolare animate the three communities with people of all ages. The meeting with the Archbishop, Mons. Tadeusz Kondrusiewicz was important and he affirmed: «The world today needs witnesses. They believe in you because they see your life, not because you teach. The witness of lay people is very important: they bring the virus of the Gospel (...) In Belarus something is being born. Do not be afraid to come to this land, because here you can develop yourselves». The guarantee of a future development lies in the same troubled history of the Belarussians and this is manifested also by the great collaboration that exists among the Orthodox and the Catholics who are 17% of the population.



Belarus, May 23, 2015. With the community of Minsk

On the day of Pentecost Emmaus and Gesù left Belarus to go to the Mariapolis Fiore, not far from Warsaw. The little town is «in bloom» because of the joyous presence of all the focolarinas and focolarinos of Poland, and nature itself celebrates this feast. Emmaus cannot hide her joy at meeting «this array of children of Chiara who have remained faithful» and introducing the answers to their questions she said that she could summarize everything in the word communion. «A more profound, real comunione... could answer every



Poland, 24 May 2015. The arrival the the Mariapolis Fiore

question. In communion you don't find the answer, but the principle of every answer».

Other meetings followed with the priests and the religious and then in Krakow with the gen3. Emmaus and Gesù always encouraged the Poles to offer the values that they possess. «You must be courageous!» the President repeated, echoing that phrase, "Do not be afraid, open the doors to Christ!", of the great Polish Pope, who is now a saint together with other glorious children of this country, such as Maximilian Kolbe and Faustina Kowalska.

To the youth in Katowice, who asked Emmaus and Gesù what their impressions were during this trip, she confided that as the president of the Movement she has had the occasion to go around almost the entire world and of how God had always helped her to discover the gift that each Country is. After mentioning the characteristics of some of the peoples she affirmed that she found in Poland a people of integrity, who know who they are, with an integrity rich in values and untainted: values that, being human, are Christian. She did not hide her worry that other countries could ruin these characteristics which make the Polish people "unique".

Jesùs Moran, shared that at the archbishop's residence of Krakow he saw a large series of photos of Saint John Paul II and what can be seen in the images is man in his fullness and he explained this using the words of the *Gaudium et spes*: «Christ reveals...man completely to man and makes him see his extremely high vocation».

Emmaus and Jesùs met with Card. Stanisław Dziwisz at the Archbishop's residence in Krakow and there he encouraged the Movement to grow and spread throughout the Country.

An important moment was the participation of Emmaus and Jesùs in the III Christians amongst Muslims Day in Poland: «Isa bin Marjam/Jesus Christ – Brother of each one of us», held at the Center of Culture and Dialogue Doha. This day of dialogue is inserted within the course of three main events in the dialogue among Christians and Muslims in Poland. Emmaus, after focusing on the value of Jesus' commandment par excellence, wished that

«God, "the greatest and most merciful", would help us to look upon everyone with the gaze of a brother or sister, with the measure of love that he revealed to us, so that together we can build a world

that everyone is waiting for where brotherhood and true peace reign».

Upon the invitation of Imam Abdul Jabbar Koubaisy, director of the Center and vice-president of the Muslim League in Poland, various representatives of the local authorities, the Catholic, Orthodox and Lutheran Churches; from the

University of Slesia and also from the Jewish Community of Katowice also attended.

To crown the trip in Poland, Sunday May 31, in a theatre in Warsaw, the meeting of Emmaus and Jesùs with all the members of the Movement in Poland took place. The members presented all that had blossomed in Polish lands with the arrival of the spirituality of unity from the then GDR. A fantastic journey which, through experiences, stage productions, artistic and folkloristic numbers, brought everyone from city to city, getting to know that which the seed of the Charism has produced in more than forty years. Each protagonist presented himself or herself with a flower in hand which at the end is placed in a vase forming a marvelous bouquet, which was then offered to the Guests of Honour, as the messengers of Mary, Queen of Poland.

Among the "flowers" of this land, those who are already in eternity were not forgotten.

Emmaus confided that she would take home from this trip: «admiration and gratitude to God for you!»

The tour of the «Polish garden» concluded with a song to the black Madonna of Czestochowa.

Emmaus remembered that in one of the old songs of the Movement, which lists out all the attributes of Mary according to the place where she is venerated, it says that in Czestochowa she is the «shield against evil». History has been a witness to this and the final suggestion of Emmaus to the Polish people is a consequence of this: «If Mary is queen, then let her reign!».

Tanino Minuta



Katowice, May 29, 2015.  
At the meeting of dialogue

See in Mariapoli online  
[www.focolare.org/notiziariomariapoli](http://www.focolare.org/notiziariomariapoli)  
the reports of the various stages of the  
trip in Poland and Belarus



## Big Zones

# Increase the communion

**In the Mariapolis Fiore, Little Town of Poland,  
the Delegates of the Big Zone of Europe met from June 1 to 3.**

This new reality includes 51 states with 47 official languages and with around 800 million inhabitants. It extends from Greenland up to the easternmost point of Siberia and embraces the Asian nations of: Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan.

This first meeting already showed that the new Big Zone of Europe, favours crossing the threshold of one's own nation and it increases communion also on an international level.

And this is precisely one of the principal aims of the «new set-up», that communion is lived in all fields and spheres. But it is not enough to be linked in a network through the means of communication, what is needed is a person-to-person encounter, «to be able to look at one another in the eyes», just as one of the Delegates said. Thus it was decided to share with each other the dates of the entire annual programme of the zones so as to open up the various activities to international participation.

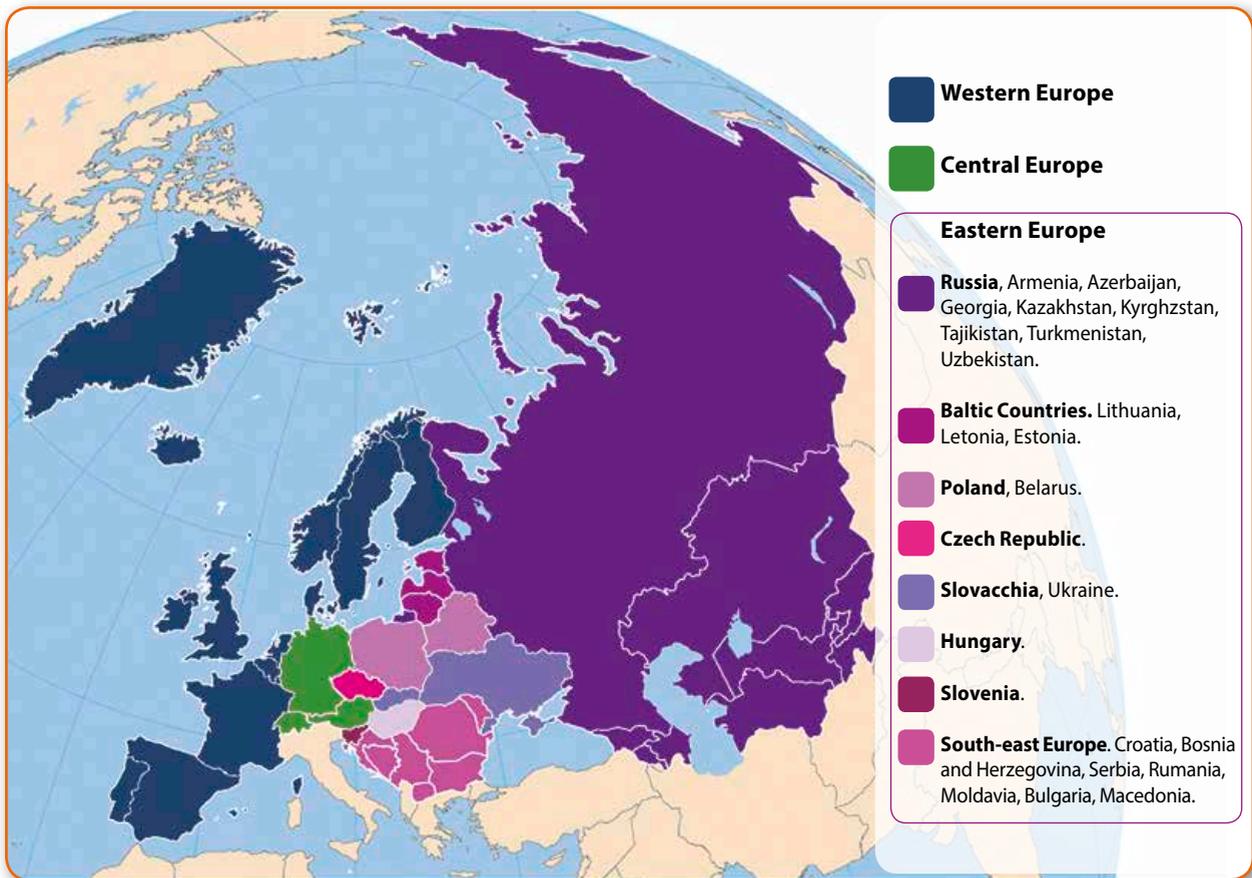
Aside from this there is the need to encourage people to visit the focolares, the nuclei, the gen units, the local communities... in the respective realities in other Countries.

The Delegates of the Zone also had a wide-ranging dialogue with Emmaus and Jesús. Afterwards, the commented on having lived «a strong moment of God wherein they saw a new and luminous path open up step by step for the Movement in Europe ».

Speaking among other things about the «new set-up», Emmaus reaffirmed, that the underlying vision is the original one, «the vision of Piazza Cappuccini. Therefore it is not a vision of a great organization, or greater diffusion... It is a vision of greater unity, of greater exchanges, of greater intensity of living for one another. And then all the rest will come as a consequence».

Another topic was the actualization of the charism which means in summary: to look at the needs of humanity today and to look for the answers to them. Thus to ask ourselves, Emmaus





said: «If Chiara were here today what would she do? [...] Certainly she would find a way to address them. We must find the way by living the Ideal, living the charisma». We cannot simply follow answers that were given before, but «neither can we stigmatize the past and say: Well they made a mistake because... No! They did what was considered as adequate, what was right, in that moment, in order to answer to the needs of that moment. Maybe there were some mistakes, just as there will be mistakes also in the things we do».

In the Big Zone of Europe there are different Little Towns in various stages of development. They are really treasures! According to Emmaus, the Little Towns, in whatever situation they are in, just beginning, already progressing, not yet started, are «realities that must be defended, protected and possibly developed, so that they are able to fulfill their role», also as points of irradiation. Each one should identify the specific

service that it can give, «in such a way that all the Little Towns can have their own characteristic» and to be purely of service to the other Zones.

During the meeting, with much serenity, some nations were able to express the uneasiness that they had to endure in the past. The fact that they were welcomed and understood, laid the foundation for turning a new page.

The general Assembly of last September underlines the importance of formation. And so it was a great opportunity for Europe that Montet, the international Little Town of formation, is situated in Switzerland which means within its territory, so that it can be made use of more in the future. It is for this reason that the persons responsible for Montet came to the meeting in Poland and will continue to participate in the meetings of the Delegates of the Zone of Europe.

Severin Schmid



# Up2Me Project

## Integral formazione in the light of the Charism

**A course to help teens to form a moral conscience,  
the identify the reason for their choices and to be able to express them**

To realize a plan of formation on emotions and sexuality for the integral and harmonious growth of pre-adolescents and adolescents. This is the objective of Up2Me, which means «it depends on me», the course that is being planned and developed by Teens for Unity, New Families and New Families Action Non-profit organization together with a team of experts in various disciplines and in collaboration with the Sophia University Institute (SUI).

Up2Me was born to try to answer the many questions of the gen3 and the Teens for unity in such a way that they can find the meaning and explain their lifestyle, which is often different and opposite to what they find around them. Up2Me also would like to respond to the requests of parents, assistants and animators for a course of global and systematic formation for teens on emotions and sexuality. After the experimental phase, the project hopes to address the teens of the parishes, schools, youth groups and associations. A gen3 defined it as «a help for me to get to

know myself physically and mentally» and another spoke of it as «an occasion that we don't have everyday to face important, delicate topics with experts».

Up2Me is a modern and innovative course that begins from the anthropological vision that arises from the Charism of unity. The paradigm of reference is the person in his relationship with the other, in his ability to love and be loved, to give and to receive. «Up2Me is something important – Piero Coda, dean of the SUI explained – not only because it has a precise, concrete objective which is of great relevance in the educational plan of the Opera, but first and foremost because it represents the concretization of a first segment of a wider plan which is the formative, global, integral plan that arises from the Charism of unity».

Up2Me is also in line with the proposals which emerged from the Assembly 2014: it inserts itself in «going out» inasmuch as it is suitable, content and language wise, to all teens; it is the fruit of the collaboration of different



realities of the Opera and therefore realizes «together»; it offers a course of formation for teens and adults and therefore is in tune with the objective of being «suitably prepared».

The team work with the experts of the Opera (doctors, psychologists, pedagogists) and members of the New Families Center and Teens for unity Center, also in the light of the experiences in this ambit realized in some Zones, allowed for the realization of a course subdivided into three age groups: 9-11 years old, 12-14 years old and 15-17 years. For each of these groups 10-12 didactic units were prepared that cover a formative itinerary of several months. The light of the Charism illuminates not only the content, but also the methodology which is completely interactive, suitable to the different age groups. At the basis of the course is the vision that the Charism gives us and which makes us look at the person in an integral way, helping us to understand him in his being «relationship». The objective is to allow the adolescent to form his own moral conscience that will help him to find the reason for his own choices and will make him capable of expressing it. The teens, stimulated by some *input* are encouraged to undertake a personal journey of formation, so as to arrive a making decisions on important values that concern their personal life and that as a couple. There are many moments of sharing and dialogue among the teens and with the adult experts.

For each group of teens the course is conducted by two tutors: to adults (a man and a woman) prepared for their role through specific courses. The first course will take place in Italy from November 18 to 22, 2015, in such a way that the first experimental group of Up2Me will be able to start in different countries starting January 2016. In the meantime, to examine the validity in the field of this project while the contents are being defined, two pilot experiences with groups of gen3 and Teens for unity have just concluded in Turin and in the province of Rome. A parallel course is also being developed for parents who may be interested.

«Up2Me has started in me a process of maturation that I would certainly not have been able to do alone» one of the teens in the pilot group said. Another added: «Up2Me has given me a push to go against the current with respect to that which the media offers and to create our own opinion on facing sexuality and emotions». «After Up2Me – concluded a teenaged girl – I changed my way of seeing the persons around me. I began to think not only according to how I think, but also to consider how the others think, therefore, in relationship with the others, and not to stop at only my own impressions, but to consider the person in front of me».

*prepared by Anna Lisa Innocenti*

# Bishops in Bangalore

## Debtors to the world of this light



**For the first time in India a meeting  
of Bishops friends of the Movement**

the desire to maintain the relationship so as to support one another reciprocally with the spirit of Chiara.

Aware of the difficulties lived by the Church in India up to the rising up of unexpected persecutions in a nation that has been very tolerant, Chiara on the day of her visit to the Indian Episcopal Conference in 2001 noted how the life, which is a fruit of the Charism could

«This is the atmosphere of family, where each one feels at home. Here we can freely share experiences and profound thoughts. We strongly feel the need for this.»: this is the way one of the participants expressed the reality lived during the meeting of the Bishops of Asia entitled «Eucharist, mystery of communion», that was held in Bangalore last June 3 to 6.

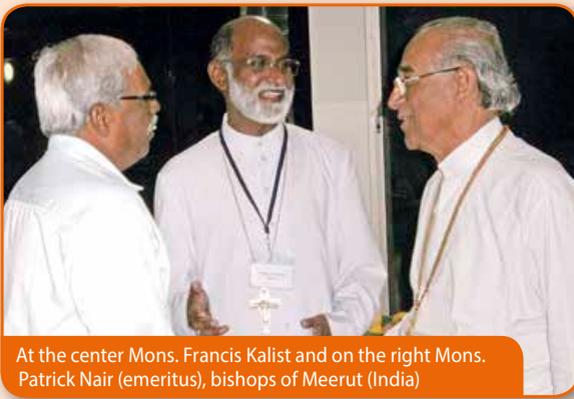
The event was preceded by two days of intense communion and focolare life among some Bishops «animators». The words of Klaus Hemmerle – «We are debtors to the world of this light» – was imprinted in their hearts, stimulating them to be «leaven» in carrying out their ministry according to the typical style of the charism.

Among the 22 bishops who came one noticed their origins from different Asian nations (Korea, the Philippines, India, Pakistan, Thailand), but also the group of 12 Indian Bishops came from various points of this subcontinent, such as the Himalayas, Kerala, Bengala. «To see an Indian Bishop concelebrate with one from Pakistan is already a sign of hope», one of them commented. The unity experienced during those days created a new bond among the Bishop friends in India,



From left: the bishops Mons. Joshua Mar Ignathios Kizhakkevittil and Mons. Gerardo Alminaza with the Hindu prof. indù Shubada Joshi

bring comfort to the Bishops: «While we give our spirituality to the world (always preceded by witness) we also carry out the work of evangelization. And so ours is an entirely new way, but effective in bringing Jesus to the world». This consideration is very much actual and alive today: «In my Diocese I have some difficulties with Hindu sects who sow a campaign of hatred and put us to the test – a Bishop admitted. I know that this will continue to happen, but now I have understood what I must do: to love with the Love of God. Whether they are Hindu, Muslim, Christian... they are all children of God. God continues to love us».



At the center Mons. Francis Kalist and on the right Mons. Patrick Nair (emeritus), bishops of Meerut (India)

In the programme – prepared by the Bishop animators, with the help of Pina Peduzzi of the secretariat of the Bishops with Giuliana Taliana and Antonio Salimbeni, delegates of the Zona – the reflection was centered on the Eucharist. Other moments just as important were the contributions of Lucia Abignente on the vision of sanctity in Chiara and that of Bishop Robert Mallari on the dialogue with Oriental Religions, not to mention the updating on the trip of Pope Francis to the Philippines and Korea. Present among us was Bishop Lazzaro You of the diocese of Daejeon: the desire of communion with the Pope had pushed him to share about the initiative of the Asian Youth Day that his diocese was organizing. He never imagined that the answer to his letter would be the decision of His Holiness to participate personally!

Two conversations of Chiara during the Hindu-Christian symposium of 2002 were welcomed with a great silence of the soul. In her sharing, the Hindu professor Shubada Joshi confided: “Before meeting Chiara, I already

met her through the members of the Focolare. It was a dialogue of life, to think together, to be together”. With emotion she then spoke of the vital impact of this encounter: “Chiara was dripping with the nectar of spiritual wisdom”. Her words were echoed by the resolute expressions of the Indian bishop Francis Kalist : “I grasped in Chiara her passionate love for God... She is the St. Paul of today”.

The community of Bangalore, with discreet and concrete love, served as the background for the meeting. A Bishop commented: «I was very much touched by the role that the Focolare carried out in the Church: communion, unity, without which nothing can be built» and another: «Jesus asked us to love the way He loved us; the Focolare teaches us how to love the way Jesus loves».

The Pact of reciprocal love lived totally by everyone, sealed the supernatural atmosphere of the meeting and immediately new prospects were opened: «In the first meeting that I will have with the priests I will tell them that I am ready to give my life for them» a Bishop affirmed; and another: «Chiara truly moves the Church, builds the Church and also moves the world. At times meetings for Bishops are organized but they are juridical, communion is lacking. This instead is the atmosphere of family. I leave renewed».

At the end of the meeting, no other words could be found to express the gratitude for the reality lived than the song of the *Magnificat*.

*Francis X. Kriengsak Kovithavanij, moderator*



# Family-focolares

## Together for «Ut omnes»

Today all over the world there are around 800 couples wherein both spouses are married focolarini. Their peculiarity emerged during the meeting with the Center of the Opera

Many family-focolares, in the course of their life, have experienced at least one transfer for the Opera. Here is the story of one of them from the Philippines who moved to South Africa for three years.

### From the Philippines to the world: the adventure of Tess and Floro

«As a family we were living through happy times: just a little over fifty years old we enjoyed good health, we had a business distributing newspapers that was in continuous expansion also thanks to the support of our three children in running the business. Thus in 2003, it was proposed to us to transfer to South Africa at the service of the Opera. It was like lightning coming from a clear sky.

Truth be told we never thought about moving. In the call to be married focolarini the idea of moving to another place for God was that «something more» in radicalness that had attracted us. And so, after the initial surprise – it was not easy to leave everything: the business, children, grandchildren – we accepted this proposal as a formidable opportunity to renew our “yes” to God.

At Johannesburg the focolare community welcomed us with warmth and trust, but our insertion into the wider social environment was not easy. The years before the fall of *apartheid* in 1994 left many scars. What guided us were the words of Chura: “Love conquers all”. And, slowly, the people of the territory began to invite us to join their activities.



Floro was in the Commission for Christian unity and there he shared his experience of working with a group of entrepreneurs, also imparting a lesson on the Economy of Communion. We were invited by the Indian community headed by Ela Gandhi and became involved in the governing Commission on *hiv/aids* acquiring support at a distance for orphan children born with the virus. In 2005 encouraged the participation in the Familyfest of various Movements and the Archbishop asked us to help him re-activate the “Family Life Desk”.

At Johannesburg and Mafikeng (South Africa) and in Lilongwe (Malawi) we visited the Filipino communities, giving life to a small virtual group of the “Password” which in time grew and reached other countries. Due to the local legislation we were not able to work, but all the essential things we needed to live came from the profits of our business in the Philippines that was being brought ahead by our children.

After three and a half years we returned to the Manila. We felt “lost” here! In South Africa we were involved in many activities

# More of being rather than doing

## The meeting with the Centre of the Opera

Among the different meeting of the Center of the Opera, for the first time there was also the meeting of the Family-focolares, a reality which is directly linked to the President, assisted by a special office entrusted to Maria and Raimondo Scotto, with the collaboration of Letizia and Luca Magri.

On February 26, the day of the meeting, Emmaus spoke many times, confirming the preciousness of the family-focolare for the Opera, because they are «*like a focolare, which means persons who have given their life to God for "Ut omnes", for the same aim for which the also other focolarini give their lives*».

Their being a «focolare», Gesù underlined, is a characteristic that must still be discovered. That is why it is important to form them in this, their specificity. «*The family-focolare – the Co-president said - is more of being rather than doing. It unites sacramentality (which is historical) with prophecy. A novelty that we must discover also as persons responsible and as focolarine and focolarini who live in community*». Emmaus then concluded: «*When both spouses in the family have the vocation to be focolarini and they make the promises, we should celebrate, just as when a new focolare is opened. We must point this out, in such a way that the Opera becomes aware that another focolare has been opened in their zone*».

and now it seemed as if we no longer found our place.

It was a trial that we were able to overcome through our unity as a couple and the unity with our responsables who helped us to gradually find our roles once again in the activities of the zone. We were also asked to collaborate in the congresses and workshops on the family in different parts of Asia.

In the meantime, in South Africa three married focolarinas and two married focolarinos completed their formation and gave a notable support to the focolare. And in Lilongwe, where there is no focolare center, a family-focolare is bringing ahead the community of Malawi. We went back twice to visit the communities with whom we remained in regular contact.

We feel that we two, as a couple, were the ones who benefited the most by this transfer, and our children, who found themselves having to manage the business by themselves, grew as persons, both spiritually and also humanly and professionally».

*prepared by Maria and Raimondo Scotto*



# Married Focolarini Between two fires

There were one hundred fifty participants from Asia, Africa, America and Europe,  
at the school held in Castel Gandolfo from May 10 to 24



«For me, it was as school of life that was formative in all senses». An impression that describes well what the participants to the school for married focolarine and focolarini held from May 10 to 24, experienced. In reality, the school began on May 9: while the participants were arriving, Graziella De Luca was leaving for Paradise. The next day, she was also joined by Emanuela Ramogida of Roma, who was preparing to join the married focolarine. The school immediately placed its roots between Heaven and earth. «The life of every moment in the focolare – a married focolarina said – has made

me understand more the will of God for me: to be another Jesus, to be another Mary».

With Emmaus and Jesús they followed the principal stages of the retreat of the Council in Trent. They were in their focolare the whole afternoon! Their considerations on the vocation were also very important. «As married popi - they wrote in their message of thanks - we feel that this is our task: to spread the light of God, to go out towards the others, towards everyone, until the world enters into the focolare and the focolare illuminates all its realities».

The two moments dedicated to Foco brought a very special light. Accompanied by Alberto Lo Presti some pages of his writings were read and deepened. «Chiara Foundress,



Teacher given to us by God, our dearest Mother – Foco wrote to Chiara after listening to her theme on the vocation of the married people – [...] You told me the I too am now a focolarino. Thank you, thank you, Chiara: it is the apex of my



Moments during the meeting with Marco Tecilla



Interventions of Mariele Quartana and Alberto Lo Presti

dreams and prayers. You have made my life happy: you have given it a divine goal. Thousands of lay people would have been, throughout the centuries, moved and happy for this gift which is new and marvelous».

Gratitude, but also profound simplicity and humility characterize Foco as a married focolarino. And God made him an important instrument in the history of the Opera, and in going over it helped us to understand his prophetic contribution. The comment of that Alberto Lo Presti made in describing that day when Chiara «enters into the bosom of the Father» is interesting. Remembering that Foco had to leave because he had been invited to hold a conference, he made this observation: «It often happens to the married couples. At the end of a beautiful retreat the moment to go back home always arrives for a married focolarino. It is a particular face of Jesus Forsaken which is always present in his life. When he is at home he is not in the focolare, when he is in focolare he is not at home. It is there that he is called to choose God as the “all” of his life ».

One afternoon the whole school was transferred to the Center of the Opera, welcomed by the counselors, whom some of them knew from when they were gen4! «Those responsible for an aspect – a focolarina wrote – made us deepen our vocation and to fall in love with it even more».

During the weekend, divided into small groups, they were all distributed to the focolares of the Roman Mariapolis: they cooked, took walks, did their meditation, shared joys and sufferings.

Another special moment, which was solemn for everyone because each one renewed their “yes”, was the Mass celebrated by Jesús, with Emmaus present, during which Lupita, married focolarina from Mexico, pronounced her perpetual promises.

When the school started everyone had the impression of coming from the «fire» of the family; then for two weeks, God asked each one to leave it and to immerse themselves in the «fire» of the focolare. We have now reached the last day, and once again we need to «lose» in order to go home and to be only a gift for whoever is beside us. The experience of Marco Tecilla who brought everyone into the first men’s focolare was of great help. He began it alone and one day, looking at the picture of Jesus Forsaken, he thought: «But I am not alone, there is you and I».

Then his first focolare companions began to arrive. The experiences he shared spoke of their different characters, the misunderstandings, of starting again: «I remember – he confided – the jumps of joy whenever we regained the presence of Jesus among us».

This is what it means to be «between two fires»: to contribute in generating in the focolare an atmosphere of the supernatural family, to make the family a focolare.

Before leaving, an exchange of experiences. One for all: «I truly felt that I was part of just one big focolare. I will bring in my heart the reality of a united world and I will do all that is possible to bring this also to my country, to my city... in the places where God wants me to be».

*Salvatore and Adriana Lamagna*

## Media

# Violet and (is) unity

**The meeting with the realities linked to the aspect of «Unity and means of communication» wrapped up the series of appointments of the Centers with the Center of the Opera.**

How do we form professionals who work in the field of media and who are willing to work in a team animated by the Ideal? What does it mean to keep up with the pace of the times, or rather to be at the forefront in the use of these means, aiming at the goal of «*Ut omnes*»? How do we communicate the light of the charisma with creative faithfulness? What are the strategies to deal with situations of «crisis» that affect communication and the use of the social network? What instruments to use? These are just some of the questions with which the team of the realities linked to the Violet presented itself at the double appointment with the Center of the Opera on April 29 and May 13.

We add to these questions also the perennial challenge of the translations, that always keep alive the worldwide dimension of the Opera, the reflection on the *Notiziario Mariapoli* online as the instrument of «participation» for the members of the Focolare Movement, the importance of creating a

coordination for the policies of information technology and of being able to program the activities, when instead we seem to be working always in a state of emergency.... And then the question of the general Archives of the Focolare Movement (see box): audio and video material which are at risk due to the equipment that have by now become obsolete, with the consequent urgency of immediate digitalization, just to mention one of the many other points.

These are open prospects, paths, for which we have not arrived at any conclusions but that, as Emmaus underlined, «call for an increased awareness and very concrete decisions on the part of the Center of the Opera». There is also the idea of combining the theme of next year – Unity – with a deepening of the aspect of the Violet in the whole Opera.

We presented ourselves as just one team, with its different facets: the group of communication (Collegamento CH, CSC Media, SIF, *Notiziario Mariapoli*, [focolare.org](http://focolare.org)),



Il gruppo della comunicazione



L'ufficio informatica



L'ufficio traduzioni e l'ufficio trascrizioni



CSC Media

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the General Archives, Translation Office, Transcription Office, and the Information Technology Office, the backbone that allows all the rest to function. What emerged therefore was the importance of the journey undertaken in these last few years in terms of coordination of the editorial staff working at the Center, and more recently among all the realities linked to the aspect of Unity and means of communication. We see this as the possibility for us to translate into concrete terms the guidelines which the Opera has given itself: to go out, together, suitably prepared. It seems indispensable to us to go ahead, towards a greater integration of our resources: a journey, this of integration, that is ongoing in the entire world of communication.

Among the novelties presented by the Office of Information technology, is the new version of Indy, the system of online archiving of the texts of Chiara and the Presidency. Here in synthesis are the modifications that have been done:

- correction of the errors that were pointed out
- new quick search functions according to date, type, language...
- a refreshing of the graphics and an improvement in its use on mobile devices
- more content of Chiara Lubich and of Emmaus Maria Voce, Giancarlo Faletti and Jesús Morán (including many of those in the old program «Archives»)
- translation of texts into English, French, Spanish, Portuguese, Slovenian, German, Korean, Dutch (3000 in all)
- updated video *tutorial*



A particular importance was given to the aspect of formation. It was recalled how many of those who work at the Center in communications are here today thanks to a specific appeal made by Chiara and by the Center of the Opera, who encouraged the formation of people in this field. It is thus necessary to make especially the younger generations more aware that they can commit themselves (also as a profession) in working for this strategic front.

In this regard Jesus reaffirmed the importance of a project of formation: *«I believe that now we need a change of mentality because there will always be urgent needs. It is not just the world which is running, but the Opera is also running, we have many fronts. But if we don't think of a minimum of fundamental and strategic planning according to how the world turns, in view of "Ut omnes", we will find ourselves empty-handed, we will find ourselves without people who are prepared». To plan therefore, «with a bit of resources and a bit of investment». Without losing sight of the fact that «through the means of communication we are making the experience of "Ut omnes"».*

So a Summer School is being planned, a training in media at the center open to the gen or to other youth who would like to make an experience of this kind, in a «planning office» that can work side by side with «fund-raising», which is already operational.

And, finally, a call to the «two fundamental coordinates of man, space and time». Emmaus recalled that *«if the archives is the time [that guarantees the continuity of the Opera], the technical service structures are*

the «space that allows us to reach also those areas where just a short while ago seemed to be impossible to reach». Finally, a «thank you to this expression of this expansion of the

*Violet – the treasures of this colour which is the last but which contains everything – and above all keep up the good work».*

*Maria Chiara De Lorenzo*



General Archives of the Focolare Movement

## A living organism of a people on a journey

**An in-depth study on the reality in constant evolution**

The Archives born from Chiara herself around fifty years ago and which developed with the birth of the Chiara Lubich Center in 2008, was embarking on an ulterior development.

The General Archives is rich with the extremely precious archives of Chiara but also of the archives of Iginio Giordani, of Fr. Pasquale Foresi, of Mons. Klaus Hemmerle, of the first women and men focolarini, of the new Presidency. Aside from this the archives of the centers which saw the birth and the development of the branches and the movements and the archives of

the zones that safeguard the life of the Ideal incarnated in cultures and in the different peoples throughout the planet, are also intimately linked to it. One can grasp how at the heart of this General Archives beats the dimension of relationships, essential expression of our charism.

With great passion, professionalism and faithfulness an enormous work has been done throughout the years to safeguard this patrimony. On the other hand there is an awareness of how much there is still to do on various fronts, first of all the digitalization which, because of the obsolete equipment and the formats undergo-

ing great transformation, there is the need to “invest in reinforcements”.

Some critical aspects were also taken into consideration that have emerged evidently and urgently which require strategic choices and shared management methods.

It was suggested to set-up an archival working Commission to undertake a more in-depth study of the various components of the General Archives, taking into consideration the work that has already been done and to elaborate a project or to develop those already ongoing so as to respond to the challenges of today. This Commission must also prepare simple and clear guidelines, that will serve as a reference for the Center and for the Zones regarding this topic.

Other topics proposed: to begin the process so that the Archives of Chiara and of Igino Giordani will be recognized as be-



ing of noteworthy historical interest.

After an open dialogue, that showed the joy and the interest of those present, the conclusions of Emmaus and of Jesús Mòran were very important:

Jesús: «I think it is important to give it an official role: it is true that the Archives has always existed, but the one of 2008 is not the same as the one today. Now we can say that the Archives begin, maybe just as Chiara had thought of it for the “after”. It now has a role that it did not have before: now it is very im-



*portant because Chiara is no longer here and a new historical phase begins».*

Emmaus: «*The Archives was founded by Chiara, not by us. It had its own development, its own history that was concentrated first in the study of Chiara’s things; now it has grown bigger because many other realities have come in, because the Archives of Chiara does not produce documents, it stopped there. In this sense, now there is a novelty because there are no longer new documents of Chiara, but we look at everything that Chiara has produced and those things that come from the Opera, which means Chiara today because the Opera is the life of Chiara actualized today. Therefore this reality continues and will continue for centuries to come and it will never be an external work.*

*The Pope said that time is more important than space. I think that the Archives is truly going in this direction, because it does not guarantee so much the expansion of the Opera externally but rather the memory of the Opera, the continuity in time of the Opera, not only as a memory but as a continuity of inspiration, a continuity of the Ideal to bring ahead».*

*Margarida Nobre, Jorge Lionello Esteban*

In Mariapoli online  
the various meetings of the Centers  
with the Center of the Opera

## Parish and Diocesan Movements

# Many but one body

Congress for the animators at Castel Gandolfo

From April 23 to 26 more than an average 900 people were present daily, among youth and adults, of which a good number were priests coming from all the European countries and some from the non-European continents.

«We felt ourselves to be fully Opera and fully Church – someone said – and with this awareness we go forth to build “*Ut omnes*” there where we are».

The impression, as repeated by many, was that of a special Congress, rich in concrete and profound experiences, high-level interventions and a spontaneous and constant communion of soul. There was a never-ending line of people during the communion of soul. There was an atmosphere of great joy and the feeling of being a family.

We truly saw the title of the Congress become a reality: «Many but one body». It began with the preparation at the Center that was done together with the secretariat of the Parish and Diocesan Movements, with the Centers of the priest focolarinos and priest Volunteers and the gens, which was repeated in the same way in the different Zones.

Some impressions: «The meeting was a crescendo and of great actuality, in full commu-



nion with the Church and with the Holy Father. It was concrete in going out, carrying out the dialogues through life experiences». «I was touched by the warmth that was the motor behind all the relationships. I felt that I found here the same life of the first community of Trent. This year wherein we are going in-depth on the Eucharist, this experience has made me understand how to live the body of Christ, by being a joyful witness of His Love».

The meditations of Chiara on the Eucharist really entered in profundity; the Eucharistic celebrations were sacred moments of union with God. Many said that it was as if they were making their « first communion».



There were many experiences shared, in the hall or in the *forums*, of different kinds and coming from different nations which all highlighted the power of the «Opera going out». They centered above all on the 360° dialogue in the parishes and dioceses, the commitment to go towards the peripheries and the impact on civil society. In a moment of crisis, the attentive and vigilant presence of the Church is much more visible: aid to the homeless, solidarity meals, acceptance and welcome of asylum-seekers and refugees ...

The dialogue on an ecumenical level was also important, through the experiences that the Movement in Hungary is bringing ahead with the Lutheran Church and in Rumania with the Orthodox Church; but also the dialogue with the great Religions especially in Europe where the Muslim presence is continuing to grow.

The intervention of Jesús was a moment of great light for everyone. The clarification that he gave on certain terminology such as being laity, ecclesiality etc. confirmed in everyone the universal, because ecclesial, dimension of the Opera.

Mons. Giuseppe Petrocchi, archbishop of Aquila, spoke about the «Church going out», underlining the term Church which, as such, is «going out» if it is truly Church, namely with Jesus in the midst. He highlighted the Marian dimension of the Charism, challenging us to bring this reality on all levels. An experiential dialogue with both of them followed that was rich in ideas.

Cardinal João Braz de Aviz presented the four characteristics of the original Church (the Word, the breaking of the bread, fraternal union and prayer) and made a comparison with the life of the spirituality of unity. In the dialogue that followed the pastoral challeng-



## With the Center of the Opera

On March 20 we had our meeting with the Center of the Opera. Some of the members of the extended secretariat of the Parish and Diocesan Movement were also present, and they shared two «historical» experiences: the one of Vallo Torinese, that has been ongoing for 40 years, and that of Ascoli, that was born in 1973.

What came into evidence was the ever-increasing need to understand how to incarnate the Ideal in the different characteristics of the local Church so as to answer to the specific needs of the territory and they also underlined how much the communion of all the realities of the Opera allows us to better answer to the needs of the Church and of humanity.

The Parish and Diocesan Movement emerged as expressions of the ecclesial genius of Chiara, concrete instruments to bring the Marian principle in the whole Church and in the entire Opera.

es of the Church today emerged (broken families, divorced persons who remarry...) and the love of the Pope and of the Church in going towards all humanity.

The concluding celebration was a beautiful, joyous moment that involved everyone in an atmosphere of the supernatural family.

The Congress was followed by a school for a big group coming from Argentina, Costa Rica, Venezuela and Canada. The very many experiences shared showed how the Ideal enters into all fields and makes the Church and humanity always more beautiful.

*Fr. Sandro Salvucci, Sameiro Freitas,  
Marco Bartolomei*



## Consultation of experts

# A Church «going out»

An initiative of the magazine on ecclesial life *Gen's* and the *Indigo of the Opera*

«A space wherein various cultural trends can express themselves and which can be opened up even more».

«It means to go out, to get involved; to enter everywhere so as to bring communion, unity».

«These days made us aware of the cultural density that certain issues require, so as to live "going out"; they have helped us to grow in the sense of ecclesiality».

These are some of the echoes from the Consultation of experts that was held at the Center of the Opera on May 20-21, organized by the *gens* magazine on ecclesial life and by the *Indigo of the Opera*. There were 88 participants: experts, persons responsible of the ecclesial branches and coordinators of the means of communication of the Movement, members of the general Council.

At the opening, Emmaus underlined our characteristic contribution to the life of the Church and to humanity: a contribution that is born from Jesus in the midst.

In four sessions – each with two interventions of experts and followed by dialogue – some themes of particular actuality were tackled:

- A Church going out: from the Second Vatican Council to the *Evangelii gaudium* and ecumenical prospects (Vincenzo Di Pilato and Callan Slipper)
- The privileged place of the poor among the People of God: a reading from the

perspective of the Charism (Lucas Cerviño and Geneviève Sanze)

- Relativisms and fundamentalisms: towards a differentiated reading (Herbert Lauenroth, Vincenzo Buonomo).
- With the Church in Italy towards the National Ecclesial Convention (Florence, 9-13 November, 2015) (Mons. Giuseppe Petrocchi and Claudio Guerrieri).

Each day began with an immersion in the thought and life of Chiara: passages of *Paradise '49* on «The turning point towards humanity» presented by Vera Araújo, and the theme of Chiara at the *gen* Congress of 1972 «The Global Person (World Man)» that impressed us because of its prophetic content and its surprising actuality. These moments resounded like an invitation to go back to the almost scandalous simplicity of the Gospel.

During the concluding hour, Jesús Morán expressed his joy for this «think tank». He then highlighted some topics that must accompany the journey of the Opera: the dynamics of dialogue and its transcendent dimension (it does not start only from the I and you); the provocation of poverty (from the option for the poor to starting from the poor, like Jesus and like Chiara); the postmodern mentality, as the way of thinking of today; the provocation of Mary as our «style», to be elaborated on also culturally.

Fr. Hubertus Blaumeiser

# Men of dialogue

## The Priests' Centers with the Center of the Opera

The challenge that we gave ourselves was that of presenting a «*paginetta*» (short page) common to all the priestly realities and then each one developed their own (priest focalarinos, priest Volunteers, gens and the Priests' Movement). It was a beautiful opportunity to take a look together on the journey that we are undertaking as Centers also with the Secretariat of the Parish and Diocesan Movements.

Listening to one another was the dominant note of this meeting. On March 11, a rich dialogue began through the questions that the central Counselors of the Opera asked us. What strongly emerged was the experience of the One Opera: we did not feel that there was a «them» and an «us». Everything was shared, joys and difficulties, with a readiness to face the critical points presented in the «*paginetta*». We experienced the reality of the Opera today: in synergy and going out. What came to light were even some aspects that we did not mention, like for example the ecumenical one. But above all points, questions, suggestions that opened up new horizons and unexpected possibilities.

Here are some interesting highlights which emerged during the dialogue:

- To think about the elaboration of a formation course for those who accompany, from the perspective of the spirituality of commu-

nion in synergy with other branches or sections and maybe with the Sophia University Institute.

- The importance of following and cultivating the priests as One Opera and in the local communities .
- A preferential option for the youth, allocating important human resources for the gens.
- To give importance, in the formation, to the dialogues, underlining the experiences on an ecumenical level.
- To find solutions for the difficulties in communication with the help of the communications experts of the Opera.

Emmaus underlined, with regards to the Priests Movement, that it cannot just limit itself within the branch of the priests, they must also look outwards and thus they are the Priests Movement of which at the same time they are the animators, but that: «*it must be this current that goes out, it must be all the other priests who, influenced by this branch presented as a united front to the outside world, who will then bring the fire of the Ideal everywhere*».

We were stimulated to take the dialogues to heart in a special way, recalling how during that big meeting of '82 in the Paul VI Hall, Chiara defined the priest as a «man of dialogue». It was spontaneous to take this as the precious gift and the commitment for the future.

*prepared by the Priests Centers*



# AUW (AMU) Linked in a network with everyone

At the service of humanity so as to favour communion. The meeting with the Center of the Opera

Never-ending mountain ranges, hours and hours of travel running alongside a ravine, a community that has its roots in the pre-Incan indigenous culture. The lack of potable water supply, electricity, communication system, but a people possessing a great dignity. With these images, that bring us to Bolivar in the Peruvian Andes, where the Auw – Association Actions for a United World (*Associazione Azione per un Mondo Unito*) – Non-profit organization (*Onlus*) – is building a school for hundreds of children, the meeting with the Center of the Opera began on March 20.

Interventions of cooperation in contexts of absolute poverty; actions in support of populations hit by emergencies; projects of education and formation on developmental topics; promotional activities and support of projects through the generosity and commitment of individuals and groups. There are many ambits wherein the Auw (AMU) through the people of the Movement and not only, work to lay down the foundations for a development of communion.

For us it was a special occasion to draw conclusions together with the Center of the Opera from the more than thirty years of work, sharing the positive experiences, but also the difficulties that the world of international Cooperation is going through and which also involve us.

The intense dialogue that followed made evident the road already travelled, but also much that still remains to be done.

To respond to the many requests from the different Zones in the world, in a moment of economic crisis wherein funds have

diminished, we try to involve the local communities and the support groups in and outside Italy even more. In the Opera there are various agencies that work in the social field: we need to present ourselves together to the outside world so as to give a witness of unity and to be more effective in our interventions; for this reason we are trying to find points of synergy with New Humanity, YFUW, NFA but also with the other Auw (AMU) in Europe, and with the Latin-American network of associations inspired by the Ideal. To be on the same level of the challenges in the world today we need a greater professionalism and efficiency in the different economic, social, cultural contexts: and this is the reason for the various formation activities for those working in our social projects.

These and many others are the challenges that the Auw (AMU) is preparing to face, with faith and a renewed commitment, thanks also to the encouragement coming from Emmaus, who underlined how we are living a process in action in the whole Opera: *«Everything had to distinguish itself in order to grow, mature, to find its own identity... afterwards it must put itself again in unity with the others. ... everything that you do can acquire greater importance if it is put in common with all the others, helped to do this by the Center of the Opera through the Colours».*

*Marcella Ferrari and team Amu*





## Communion among Movement

# Remembering a battle thinking of peace

In the bicentennial of the battle of Waterloo, that changed the history of Europe, an international day of reflection and prayer for reconciliation promoted by the Movements of «Together for Europe»

18th of June, 1815: the battle of Waterloo marks the end of Napoleon's reign and a turning point in modern history. To celebrate the two hundredth anniversary of that event, there were various commemorations and manifestations, among these was an international Day of reflection and prayer held in Belgium entitled «Peace and reconciliation in Europa». The event was part of the collaboration among Movements and new communities involved in «Together for Europe». Promoted by the community «Verbe de Vie», which has its headquarterd near the venue of the battle, the event was supported by the different Movements and enriched by the testimonies and prayers. One hundred forty friends of «Together for Europe» were present, coming not only from Belgium but also from England, France and Germany.

There was the participation of numerous civil and religious personalities, such as the bishop of Liegi, Mons. Delville and Hermann Van Rompuy, ex-president of the European Council.

The interventions offered a wide historical vision: they spoke of the journey towards

peace and what could stop it; they underlined the steps that have been taken and those still to be done. During the Roundtable, animated Clotilde Nyssens, member of Parliament and honorary senator – to whom the spirit and journey of «Together for Europe» was presented during the preparations – various representatives of Movements, among which were those of the Focoalre, bore witness through their concrete experiences, to how they work for peace. Ms. Nyssens commented at the conclusion: «Through the experiences one can feel the light and ardour of Chiara Lubich».

Canto Hesius, focolarina of Belgium, in her intervention during the roundtable discussion referred to some experiences made working together with the youth as promoters of peace and she also spoke on interreligious dialogue highlighting our specific characteristic: universal brotherhood and the strength which comes from wrking together with the presence of Jesus inthe midst of us. She also invited everyone to become promoters of fraternity. In the end some people went to thank her for the hope that her words gave them.

*Colette Le Tolguenec, Ton Jongstra*





## The power of monastic life

the gift of the presence of a monk from Mount Athos  
at the international Center of the Focolare Movement



From the left, Mr. Avato, promoter of the meeting,  
The monk Nikodhimos, Dr. Balsamà of the Association  
«Together for Athos»

Saturday, May 16, one entered on tiptoe into the international Center of the Focolare Movement in Rocca di Papa. There is a special atmosphere: the visit of Fr. Nikodhimos of Mount Athos who will participate in an ecumenical conference coordinated by the «Uno» Center for Christian unity. Two hours of encounter between diverse spiritualities, among Orthodox and Catholic, but above all among brothers united in their search for God. Fr. Nikodhimos brought the power of monastic life, and he approached the reality of the life of the Focolare.

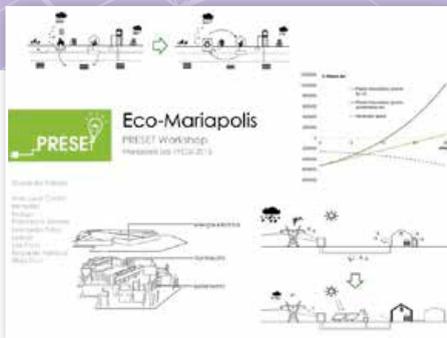
Mount Athos is located in the Calcidica peninsula and is an autonomous monastic republic under the jurisdiction of the Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople. There are around 1500 Orthodox monks living there divided into twenty monasteries. Women are not allowed to enter there. The «Santa

Montagna (Holy Mountain)», as it is called, was founded around the IX century and is one of the most important centers of asceticism in Christendom. It still carries out today its role for the spiritual development of the Orthodox community in the East and the West.

At the center of the meeting of Rocca di Papa was the projection of a documentary wherein Fr. Silvestro Bejan of Assisi, general delegate for ecumenism and dialogue of the conventual Franciscans, documented the first official visit of three Franciscans to Mount Athos which happened in 2013 with the blessing of the Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew I, as a token of gratitude for their visit to Assisi. The images made those present immerse themselves in that world wherein the days are marked by eight hours of prayer, eight hours of work and eight hours to study, eat and sleep. A dialogue with Fr. Nikodhimos followed wherein he, among other things, underlined that a monk has nothing to teach the world, it is his life of consecration to God that can help mankind.

Before leaving, Fr. Nikodhimos stayed for a moment in front of the tomb of Chiara Lubich. He brought with him the first two books of Chiara translated into Greek: *Meditations* and *Knowing how to lose*.

*Maria Wienken, Diego Goller*



At the Mariapolis Lia they are studying a management and sustainable development model for the Cittadella

## Inundations Imagine, plan, realize spaces of fraternity

**Territory, sustainability and attention of the sacred patrimony: four key-words in the course that «Dialogues in architecture» is bringing ahead in these past months**

To create a permanent laboratory of reflection and work centered around themes of urban planning, architecture, the relationship between space and society in the light of the Charism. This is the principal objective of «Dialogues in architecture» which has, since 2002, involved architects, engineers, university professors and students who are committed to giving life to spaces of communion and reciprocity in contemporary cities. There have been numerous appointments that recently saw them as the protagonists in various parts of the world. The three principal themes which they concentrated their work on were" the territory, sustainability and the sacred patrimony.

With regards to territory, its characteristics and its challenges, the research work being done that involves, among others, the Polytechnic of Milan in Italy and the La Salle University of Bogotá in Colombia, revealed its importance . In 2014 in this Country, «Dialogues in architecture» participated in the VII International Forum promoted by the Un which had as its theme the unequal growth that affects urban centers.

An occasion for the professions of «Dialogue in architecture» to get to know, together with a group of young architects from Ecuador and Colombia, what happens in the Latin American countries with its problems and possible solutions, through an itinerary parallel to the Forum with meetings and exchanges of professional experiences.

«Dialogues in architecture» wants to promote moments of discussion and in-depth study in the light of the incentives and intuitions of Chiara Lubich, but also to create an ever wider network of professionals and students who, in various ways, are involved in this field also experiencing new ways of dialogue or new formats such as fieldtrips, focus groups, competitions, itineraries of architecture, workshops. An example is «HabitAndando», a travelling workshop that will begin next month in July, born from a collaboration with the La Salle University of Bogotá: «the fieldtrip as the method and the territory as the classroom»: four stages in four Italian cities in order to study in-depth in different ways the topics linked to the territory. The journey will have Milan as its final stage,



to reflect on the meaning of sustainability in a continent such as Latin America where there is not only an environmental dimension but also a social one.

Finally the reflection on the sacred patrimony gave life to a study group made up of architects and professors from various parts of the world involved in this field. Some of them had participated in the XXXVII International Convention organized by the Order of Architects of Catalonia that was held in Barcelona in 2014 with the title «Sacred Patrimony, between permanence and innovation». A high-level convention with the presence of 150 architects, some of whom are world-famous. As a group, «Dialogues in Architecture» was represented by three members: Iole Parisi and Mario Tancredi from Italy and Tobias Klodwig from Germany. Through their intervention entitled «Flexible Christianity, between community life and sacred spaces» they were able to offer a contribution within the ambit of the debates regarding sacred spaces, expressing the novelty that can arise from the life of a Charism.

*Iole Parisi*

the headquarters of the Expò which has as its theme «Nourish the planet, energy for life». There the visit to the Expò will be enriched by a sharing of experiences and projects centered on sustainability, one of the great challenges of contemporary architecture, another important path of work of «Dialogues in architecture».

The event which took place last March 15 in the Mariapolis Lia in Argentina and linked to «Preset», a project study particularly directed at the Little Town and to which the Mariapolis Faro in Croatia also joined, was precisely dedicated to sustainability. A group of 42 young professionals (Environmental engineers, architects competent in this field, agronomists, economists, artists) coming from eight countries (Slovenia, Croatia, Germany, Italy, Colombia, Bolivia, Brazil, Argentina) tried to study a management and sustainable development model for the Little Town Lia by living for two weeks immersed in the Argentinian Mariapolis, getting to know the territory and its structures in dialogue with its inhabitants. An important occasion



Barcelona, in front of the Holy Family



VI edition



# loppianolab returns

Torna il 25 e 26 settembre, LoppianoLab, the national laboratory on economy, culture, communication and formation promoted by Lionello Bonfanti Industrial Park, Città Nuova, the Sophia University Institute and by the Little City of Loppiano will return on September 25 and 26. On September 27, other programmes prepared by the partners of LoppianoLab

The 2015 edition is entitled «Beyond fear. A culture of dialogue, active citizenship, a civil economy». Faced with the repeated episodes which on many fronts – from the long-standing lack of employment to the events of «Charlie Hebdo», from the cases of corruption to the crisis of values – that sow anxiety and preoccupation, LoppianoLab proposes pathways of reflection and action.

Using the format that already been established, Friday evening will be dedicated to an encounter-debate wherein the Sophia University Institute offers an occasion to read the present times starting from authors that are considered as cornerstones of our inland culture.

«An idea of the person, an idea of society, an idea of economy»: The title emphasizes the profound change of our society that pushes us to rethink the entire alphabet of cultural, economic, political and social values. Special guest is Mons. Nunzio Galantino, secretary general of the Italian Episcopal Conference (CEI), which will celebrate in Florence in November, the V national Convention «In Jesus Christ the new humanism».

The meeting with him will take this direction, as he is a qualified professor of anthropology and promoter of the thoughts of Antonio Rosmini, of which Città Nuova is preparing the complete edition of his writings. Mons. Galantino will present this great Italian thinker, who is still little known, as an ideal point of reference, to trace the lines of a new culture founded on the recognition of human dignity and of life in common; in dialogue with him, will be some professors and doctoral candidates of Sophia.

The proposal of the Lionello Bonfanti Industrial Park is rich: «To generate and regenerate. Enterprises, Common Goods, People», two days of the Italian EoC Convention will offer a course of analysis and prospects of action through stories and testimonies. In the preceeding days LoppianoLab will hold an EoC Workshop School for the youth called «GeneriAmo Idee (Let's generate ideas)» and in the days to follow, «Governing charism today. Communion as content and method of management».

In the typical style of «LoppianoLab» civil society will be the protagonists. In the laboratories on Saturday morning – promoted by Città Nuova – various themes at the center of the life and debates in Italy

## Nuova Umanità (*New Humanity*) magazine: the «fountain pen» of the Work of Mary

An overdose of love and wisdom: this is the next issue of Nuova Umanità (New Humanity). It's enough to look at the names at the end of the articles to understand that we are not exaggerating. Among them we can recognize Chiara Lubich and Foco, Emmaus and Jesús Morán, Piero Coda, Vera Araujo and Sergio Rondinara... What's the reason behind so much grace? This is a fruit of a research that was done in two directions: on one hand to bring out the «treasures» from the drawers, on the other hand to challenge the present making use of hot topics.

We begin by rummaging through the most beautiful things of the patrimony of Chiara. For the first time the Favola fiorita lungo il sentiero Foco (Fairytale that blossomed along the Foco path) that Chiara wrote in the summer of 1950 will be published in its entirety. Up to now it has been only partially reproduced, and the work done by Florence Gillet, for the Chiara Lubich Center, guarantees the faithfulness to the original document. After Chiara, the foundress, the word is passed on to Igino Giordani the co-founder. The presentation of the first chapter of Story of Light, which is the story of Chiara written by the refined and passionate pen of Foco that was published in the previous issue, has had a great success. The second chapter begins in 1939, and the events that follow bring Natalia Dallapiccola and Dori Zamboni be-

side Chiara and includes the vow of virginity that they made in 1943.

The recent tragic events caused by international terrorism have placed at the center of international talks the reason for peace and the coexistence among people of different religions. On the general theme of reconciliation and tolerance, Emmaus presents the vision of the spirituality of unity. In speaking of tolerance, she demonstrates the effectiveness of living «the extremism of dialogue», so as to «invent peace», just as she also shared on April 22, during the discussions on this topic at the UN Headquarters in New York.

A special section is dedicated to Giuseppe Maria Zanghì. Peppuccio, as he was known by everyone, was the first editor of the magazine and he is recognized as such by Jesús Morán, Piero Coda, Vera Araujo and Sergio Rondinara, who trace a profound and new profile of his. The mathematicians of the Abbà School instead, present Piero Pasolini, a focolarino physicist, who marked the study of nature with his vision of the unity of the physical reality.

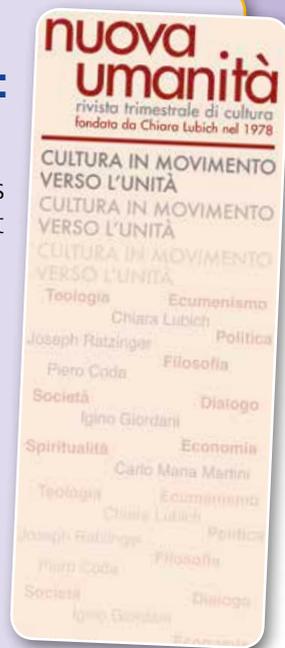
*Alberto Lo Presti*

will be tackled: family and gender, peripheries, dialogue with Islam, social identity and social communication, in dialogue with exponents of the cultural, political and economic fields. The contribution of Loppiano in the year of the Expo cannot

be missing, and so it will promote an exhibition of its artists in the various venues and spaces of the Auditorium.

*Elena Cardinali*

News and registration can be found in the websites of the promoting entities. For more information call 055.9051102



## At the Rebibbia prison One for the other

May 5 and 6, in Rome, in the Rebibbia prison, the Gen Rosso and others of the Roman Mariapolis, made a special experience of reciprocity

We experienced great friendship and emotion at Rebibbia. Two days of workshops with 29 prisoners who then became «actors» together with the Gen Rosso. In various moments of the musical Streetlight, represented by around 200 other «guests» and guards, they were onstage with us to launch the message of the musical: very convincingly!

We entered also with the trucks and all the work of unloading the instruments and stage props was done together with them. One of the 29 prisoners told us: «In these two days we were free: clear-headed, free to live with normal people, free to express what we think, to participate. If this is what you wanted to happen, you totally succeeded. Thank you».

Fr. Roberto, the chaplain, paved the way for us, and he was present with us all the time together with some of the guards with whom we were able to build a living relationship of collaboration. In the end he heartily said: «You are naive, yes, but you are fantastic!». A particularly strong moment during the perfor-



mance: the song on Jesus Forsaken (... you saw me when I cried, you cried with me, I was in trouble up to my neck and You were in trouble with me...) created a special, profound atmosphere.

And in the finale «Go, you can make it...» the 29, sang this with all their enthusiasm and strength possible, to all their companions.

Then greetings, handshakes: one could feel that they wanted to tell us in many ways that they were with us in bringing ahead that which we all experienced in those two days. The joy that was all around made us foresee a great and new hope.

This project was created by some members of the Choir of the Roman Mariapolis of Rocca di papa who were present with around 12 of its members. They also brought around twenty letters written by the people of the Mariapolis. Fr. Roberto was very happy for this and he thought of distributing them to those whom he thought needed penpal «friends». In fact, a prisoner who had started to regularly receive letters from a cloistered nun has been helping him to look at the world with new eyes.

We concluded with a dinner together with those of the Roman mariapolis and Fr. Roberto, in the staff canteen of Renibbia. «The Project "One for the other" - they told us- has reached its objective and has given us the possibility of "going out" in a concrete way and to be of service to our neighbours».



The Gen Rosso together with some of those of the Roman Mariapolis who will continue the contacts with «our friends inside»

## The Year of consecrated life

# Walking in unity

In Toronto (Canada) a moment of profound communion that has opened new prospects

Fifty five consecrated women from ten congregations together in Toronto (Canada) for a meeting that was quite an unprecedented event for such a numerous presence on Canadian soil. «This meeting has helped me to form myself, to live unity before everything else in my community where I live and with all the congregations of the world», one of the participants commented.

«Embrace new horizons» was the title of the theme, given by Chiara to the women religious in 1996 which opened a moment of communion wherein each one presented the Charism of their own founder. «Listening to one another – one of them said – I praised and thanked God for the call of each one. We must be united in His love and, as Chiara said, to live unity and communion among us, because we must work and carry out activities together». «Today I felt the grace of the presence not only of my founder – another observed – but also the presence of the founders of the other communities».

An in-depth study of the Apostolic Letter of Pope Francis for the Year of Consecrated Life and the video-intervention on religious life and its challenges by Joao Braz de Aviz, prefect of



the Congregation for institutes of consecrated life and societies of apostolic life, were touching moments. Then a profound dialogue. «An excellent programme – commented a religious – it gave me the motivation to work more in the Lord's vineyard, to reflect and renew my life as a consecrated person. This year I would like to focus on the word of God. When we are united, we can conquer the world».

Everyone left with the desire to meet again regularly. An «expo of charisms» is planned dedicated to the youth interested in consecrated life.

*The women religious of Toronto*

The powerful words of Jesus resounded within us: «You did it to me» with that dimension and joy of having given, but even more, of having received from those friends of ours who had opened their hearts and their lives to us, sharing with us in many ways, even just a phrase, profound sufferings and a hope of being reborn and of a better future. Among them was the one whose feet the Pope washed last April 2, precisely in the church above the theatre where we performed. His

eyes were still filled with emotion and we could see that he was profoundly touched by the love of God. All those who were there, and even if some of them were there for the rest of their life, they highlighted the journey of their «redemption». Our thanks to each one and we will see each other again!

In November, in fact, we are thinking of repeating this experience.

*the focolarini of the Gen Rosso*

# Graziella De Luca

*One of the first twelve,  
a design of God realized*

On the 9th of May the telegram of Emmaus which announced to the world that on that same day Graziella De Luca reached Chiara Lubich in heaven: *«Le focolarine che erano con lei e l'hanno accompagnata con Gesù in mezzo e con la preghiera – describe Emmaus –, in quel momento stavano recitando il “Vieni Santo Spirito”. Ringraziamo Dio della sua vita ricchissima! Preghiamo per lei e con fiducia, le affidiamo l’Opera “in uscita”, certi che ci aiuterà ad incendiare il mondo con l’amore».*



Castelgandolfo, 22 May, 2003, Graziella with Chiara at the Marian Congress

Graziella was among the first «twelve girls» in whom Chiara saw the personification of a «design of God»: the seven – as colours of the rainbow - concrete aspects of living the Gospel and the five continents. Graziella had a great ability in proclaiming, she possessed an exceptional evangelizing strength. For this reason, in the metaphor of the rainbow, Chiara saw the Orange in her, the spread of the ideal, the opening up to the world. Maybe it was a natural gift, but one which the Ideal transformed into flames.

Born and baptised in Trent in 1925, at 22 days old she was already on a train: her grandmother was not well and to assist her her parents moved to Messina, their native

city. They would go back to Trent only when Graziella was 17 years old. These were quite normal transfers, consistent with the events that were happening, but behind everything one could sense a reat thread, almost as if there was a hidden director who was moving circumstances and decisions to bring Graziella back to Trent. Here in fact, after years of a peaceful childhood and the many unfulfilled expectations of adolescence, a great adventure was waiting for her: meeting Chiara.

At 17 years old Graziella is brilliant in her studies, agile in sports, fascinating, pursued by her friends. Her artistic temperament even brought her to try-out for the movies. But the war erases every opportunity and because her family, which returned to Trent, had to start again from zero, she went to work in a public office. One of her colleagues invited her to a meeting. «Is it a religious meeting?» she asked.

Fiera di Primiero, 1954



«No...» her friend replied. But Graziella had a feeling that that «no» was more of a «si», but just the same she thought about it: «You want me to come? I will come! I will come dressed as modern as possible, so that you bigots can tell me that I am ruining the environment».

The appointment is at the sala Massaia. Graziella put on a flashy white dress with blue flowers, short sleeves and a ruffled collar framed by her blond braids. «Three girls came up to me. One was especially beautiful, the other two were normal. It was as if they had always known me, as if they had always loved me. One was Chiara and the other two were Natalia and Dori. Then Chiara began to speak, with the eyes of the soul I saw a great light. I understood that God is infinite love and that I had to say my yes to God. From that moment on I can say that my life began».

From that moment on, in spite of her work, the bombings, the family, Graziella never let a day pass without finding a way to go to Chiara. Once the appointment was at a convent for a kind of retreat. She came to know that Natalia would be taking the vow of chastity or better, as Chiara called it, the Flight. She wanted to do the same, but still being too young (19 years old), the priest allowed her to do so only for three months. «Why? – she replied – Many get married at a young age, and then, one stays married for the rest of her life, not just for three months!». But it was better than nothing... So she too made her first Flight, which she would later say more solemnly, thus sealing her total gift of herself to God.

From the start Chiara had the intuition that the «design» of inflaming whoever she meets with the immense love of God was hidden in Graziella. In this sense, her encounter with the twenty year-old Pasquale Foresi (Chiaretto) is emblematic: the answers that Graziella gave him, all illuminated by the Gospel lived, but above all by her being, reveal such conviction, such light, that incited in him the profound desire to participate fully in this new life, by becoming focolarino.

In the years that followed Graziella was invited to different cities in Italy, giving life to numerous communities in various regions. She moves to France, Belgium, Holland and Luxembourg... In 1964 she lands in the United States: her presence was a determining factor in the expansion of the Movement in that continent and in founding Living City and the mariapolis Center in Chicago. Her contacts with an unimaginable variety of people from the «well-off» environments to people of the ghettos, from diplomats to Church personalities.

In 1969 she retired to Rocca di Papa, where she she took care of the fledgling Gen Movement with fantasy and vivacity; with some girls she started the first world Gen center for the development of the gen life in the various continents. The testimony of one of them, Gaby, is noteworthy: «We were 7 Gen from different parts of the world. Graziella formed us to be free and open to the challenges of our times. She launched us outwards, without fear, to bring a beautiful, modern and exciting Ideal to our peers. At the same time she treated us in a



29 giugno 1975. Graziella con Igino Giordani



Rocca di Papa, maggio 1976. Incontro di responsabili di focolare. Graziella, don Foresi, Gis Calliari, Luciano Beltramo



Loppiano, May 1981



Loppiano, May 1985

way which was strong, true, radical and consistent. She rooted me in Chiara as the Source of the Charism, grafted into unity with her. She made me aware of the Ideal as a Gift of God for humankind and as a very new and extraordinary charism in the Church. One thing that she often used to say, and which gave me a great responsibility, was: "There is neither the first, nor the second, nor the third generation in the Focolare, but we are all co-founders with Chiara".

In '72 Chiara entrusted her with the Section of the focolarine, a responsibility task that she carried for eighteen years, and during which she formed entire generations of focolarine. With the love of a mother she supported them in their difficulties, she encouraged them towards new frontiers, she strengthened in them the passion for «*Ut omnes*», bringing them back to the beauty of their vocation. This is what she wrote to one of them: «Believe me, trials are needed in order to grow. In every trial that you experience tell Jesus Forsaken: I take every trial from your hands so that you can teach me how to love you and to love every neighbour the way you would love them and give me wisdom».

In the '90s she is still at the Center of the Opera where she dedicated herself specifically to that aspect which has always been the best for her: the Orange, or rather «witness and irradiation» of the Gospel. Chiara linked this aspect to a Word of the Scripture: «Fire I came to bring on earth, and how I wish it were already blazing!» (Lk 12,49), the same

one that she had given to Graziella and which she had made the motive of her life, bringing along an infinite number of people to follow Jesus.

With this fire of the love of God in her heart, she also followed the adherents of the Movement, an action shared with the different Zones of the world, that each year culminated in two very much participated international Congresses that were held at the Mariapolis Center of Castel Gandolfo. They were precious occasions to form and give vitality to persons of all generations. One of them, Patrizia, coming to know of Graziella's departure wrote her: «You loved us with a love as immense as your heart. Thank you for having believed in us, for giving us the Ideal generously, making us feel that we are a living part of the Opera and for paving the way for us to enter is as true children of Chiara. Continue to guide us to 'go out' together to conquer the world and to be Fire as Jesus expects from each one of us».

*prepared by the editorial board*

Loppiano, 29 October, 2004. At the inauguration of the Theotokos



*In this last period the departure of focolarine and focolarini for the Heavenly Mariapolis has been particularly numerous. Due to space constraints we are presenting just the salient features of their profile, while the entire text of the telegrams that Emmaus sent to the focolares are available in Mariapoli online*

## Ivan Bregant

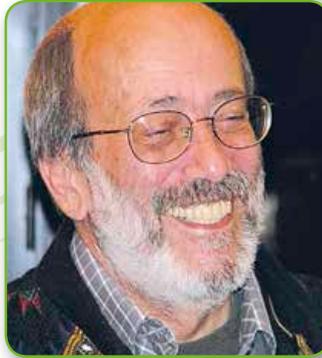
*Pioneer of the deale  
from Trieste to the Black Sea*

Ivan, focolarino of the Mariapolis Faro (Croatia) reached heaven on May 17.

Immediately after his birth - in Celje (Slovenia) in 1938 - his family moved to Italy. Since his youth he asked many questions about the meaning of life and finally lost his faith. When he was in the hospital due to severe anemia, while making an act of love for a focolarino who was in the same hospital, he discovered a new light in the Ideal and decided to follow God.

After the school of the focolarini in Loppiano, Chiara sent him to the then Yugoslavia, where he continued his studies in Lubjana and remained there up to 1994, when he transferred to the newly born Little Town Faro. «I left those lands – he himself recalled - with the word of the Gospel that Chiara gave me: “Do not be afraid little flock, because it pleases the father to give you his kingdom.” Arriving in Lubjana I found the city all decorated for the national celebration, but I had the impression that the city was celebrating the presence of Jesus among us because we were opening the first focolare. In those years, everything that had to do with religion and faith was controlled by the State and so we had to move with a lot of caution. Often we were visited by the police and interrogated, but this did not stop the development of the Movement which relied solely on the love for Jesus Forsaken. He gave us the strength to go ahead and the difficulties we had to overcome were seen as necessary for the life to spread».

Every year Ivan visited the communities that were being born in the various States, sup-



porting them in their growth and spreading love and peace. Cardinal F. Kuharic of Zagabria, commented once regarding the Movement: «We Bishops know that this is the Work of God. I am grateful that you have entered so silently and with the heart into our lands, in the most difficult moments of its history». Ivan was truly this presence of

love, silent and because of his complete trust in God Love, generated many fruits.

Who knows what a celebration Chiara and our people of the heavenly Mariapolis made for him! We too remain in this atmosphere of celebration and with joy we offer to God this pioneer of the Opera who brought the Ideal from Trieste up to the Black Sea. Very much united with mario, his brother, also a focolarino, let us pray to Ivan and entrust to him in a special way the countries of Southeastern Europe, that he loved very much.

## Ursula Tscheschner

*«Cast all your worries upon him because  
he cares for you» (1 Peter 5,7)*

Ursula, one of the first German focolarine, concluded her Holy Journey on May 5th after suffering from a stroke. She was born in 1926 in Brig, in Silesia, the second of four children. As a young person she experienced the trauma of World War II. One day, in a railroad station, she witnessed the cruelty of the deportation of thousands of people to Auschwitz. The horrors of the war and being forced to flee brought her to doubt the love of God. She was far from the Church for a period of time but didn't stop searching for her way. Meanwhile she studied

interior design/architecture. When she encountered the Focolare Movement in '57 she immediately felt the call to live for unity. Two years later she entered the focolare.

She tells the story to Chiara in December '94: «I came to know the Ideal in the moment when I was living in the anguish of seeing "false unity" spreading, creating a gray mass of mankind. Hearing of Jesus in the Midst as a way of life enkindled in me a great hope...».

In '64 with the birth of the Ecumenical Center in Ottmaring, Ursula, together with an architect of the "Bruderschaft" was entrusted the plans for the residential complex. Five years later she was in Rocca di Papa for the construction of the Headquarters for the Movement. She worked



as a translator in the Secretariat of Chiara.

In '83 she transferred to Augsburg and ten years later helped in the construction of the Little Town in Man, Ivory Coast. Then from 1999 on, she lived in the focolare in Dresden where she was responsible for interreligious dialogue: « In this way God, in His love, gave me the possibility to find the path to repair the injustices committed to many of the Jewish people».

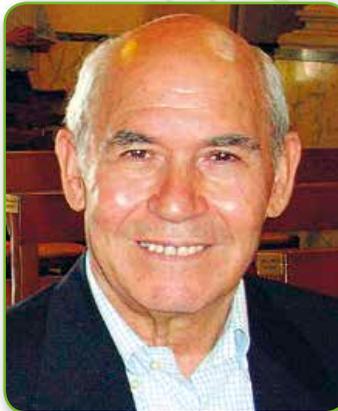
In 2009, after suffering from a fall, her illness began and as her physical weakness increased, so did her sensitivity to Jesus in the midst. Her intense union with God brought a profound note of wisdom to the focolare.

## Filippo Schillaci

*«Your mind must be renewed by a spiritual revolution so you can put on the new self.» (Eph. 4,23-24)*

A married focolarino from Catania, he left for the Heavenly Mariapolis on April 28th after a long illness. He was 81 years old. «I was born – he himself shared - in a traditionally Catholic family. But in my adolescence I started to reject everything that was taught to me, up to the point of embracing extremist ideas where I had hoped to find more social justice. But as the years passed, the more I remain disillusioned and what remained in me was bitterness ...».

When he moved to Milan for work, he found God thanks to his encounter with the Movement, where he discovered a new way of life «that quenched my sense of justice more than any clash between the classes». He married Lina, and together they worked to share the spirituality of unity with other families, bearing witness that love helps to overcome every big or small difficulty that life always presents us. They had six children.



When the same illness struck both Filippo and Lina they wrote to me in January of 2012: «This illness is for us a super grace from God which has changed our lives: a race to the finish. Most beautiful were the relationships we established and which we feel very strongly and which we want to continue to nourish... During these long periods in bed, either in the hospital or

at home, we tried to make each encounter with the others "sacred and special"... That which had most value was to live the experience of a family with Jesus among us..»

After Lina left for heaven, with the consent of his children, Filippo went to live in the focolare. Here the other focolarini were struck by the concreteness with which he incarnated the Ideal and the docility with which he welcomed from God also the difficulties of his health. He had the fullest confidence that everything was His Love. He was very peaceful up to the end, experiencing the presence of many who accompanied and supported him.

# Bruno Campagnano

*«Truly, truly I say to you: whoever believes in me will have eternal life» (Jn 6,47)*

A married focolarino who was almost ninety-five years old, Bruno returned to the home of the Father on April 28 surrounded by the love of his family and his focolare. Originally from Rome and a resident of Milan for a long time, Bruno was born in 1920 from a Jewish father and a catholic mother, but he did not receive a religious education. His profession as a chemical engineers brought him to live in various Italian cities for long periods and also in France, Belgium and Holland.

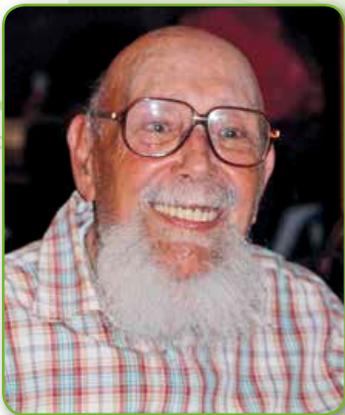
In '42 he met Melina, who came from an anti-clerical family, and they got married in '48. Three children were born from their union. At a certain point they asked themselves: «Can we leave our children without any religion even if we consider it as something that is only cultural in nature?». Some years later they met the Focolare.

In '61 their life is turned upside down by a great tragedy: their third child Paolo, three and a half years old, dies of leukemia. The close presence of the entire community of Rome helped them to live this loss without falling into desperation.

The unity between Bruno and Melina, also a focolarina, impresses all those who visit their family, which is characterized by a great openness, wherein their

two children are also involved: Giovanni, now a married focolarino, and Marco, a member of Communion and Liberation.

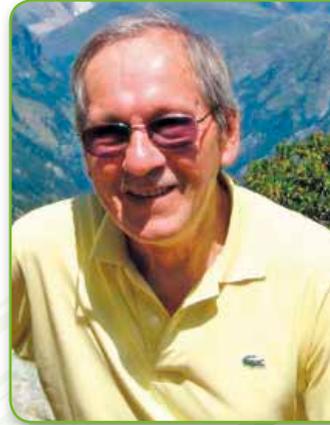
Melina died in 2003 and Bruno, now alone, began to collaborate with the parish, bringing his contribution of his knowledge of Judaism. Bruno, who now has joined Melina and their little son, will help us to realize universal fraternity together with Chiara and all our people Up there.



# Paolo Frand Pol

*«I trust in God» (Psalms 11,1)*

Paolo, married focolarino of Turin, reached the Home of the Father on May 12. Born in Cirié (Turin) in 1941, he attended and worked at the parish youth club in his city. In '67 he was invited to attend a meeting of the Movement in Milan. «I remember of that meeting – he said – was that at a certain point a young girl went up on stage and spoke about God Love. I have never heard of God spoken about in this way».



In '69 he met Raffaella, who was also of the Movement, and after a year they got married putting God at the center of their life. Coming back from their honeymoon, Paolo is confined in isolation in the hospital due to viral hepatitis and that period was a stimulus for him to make a profound reflection. In '77 he attends the school of the married focolarini and later, together with Raffaella, also a focolarina, they become the persons responsible for the New Families in the Zone and then as in-charge of the family-focolares. A service which they carry out with generosity and competence, assisted by their children, Chiara and Stefano.

Physical suffering has often been present in Paolo's life: various surgical operations and serious cardiac disturbances, until his illness in 2010. But his involvement in the Church, society and the life of the Opera do not lessen. Only during the final months he had to lessen the meetings but which continued to be held in their house.

«I am not worried of what may happen – he confided to all those who came to visit – there is a presence that I feel around me, at times it is enough to look outside the window and everything I see speaks to me of the supernatural. I can no longer read, if the effort is too great, it doesn't matter to me. Not being able to do anything doesn't mean I am not doing anything, for me ev-

ery moment is full, there is no place for boredom in my hours, everything is prayer. I am peaceful, I am present, alive in the present».

The example that Paolo leaves us is his «normalità», his steadfastness, and the love for the brother that is an essential part of his being.

## Maria Bargis

«Do not be afraid, it is I»  
(Mt 14,27)

Among the first married focolarine spouses of Turin (Italy), she left for the heavenly Mariapolis

on May 18 at 98 years old. A graduate in Classical Literature, a teacher, she met the Ideal when she had been eight years separated from her husband, with a small child and living a great solitude after also having lost her faith.

In the office of Atty. Vittorio Sabbione (one of the first focolarini) she heard him talk of «brothers who loved her even if they don't know her». The light was immediate. She herself shared: «The discovery of the love of God who not only did not condemn me, but waited for me, gave me wings to fly». The family reconciles and a faithful and generous love reigned in their home up to the moment of illness and departure for Heaven of Guido. It was a time of grace and sacred intimacy that made her see the beautiful gifts in her husband which made her say: «It would be more beautiful and true to share the story of our marriage starting from this last period».

She offered her services to the various realities of the Opera: women Volunteers, UPM etc. But her greatest passion was for ecumenism and relationships. In the various meetings with Christian communities and their pastors, her contribution of the Charism was precious, and for many years



she brought the Word of life to a Waldensian lady traveling hours by bus just for this. Up to the end she maintained contact with her former students and relatives and with all those who lived with her in the hospice where she stayed.

When she understood that she would no longer be returning from the hospital and that a new stage of her life was beginning, she wrote: «This morning I opened at random a book of Chiara Pensieri (SPiritual Thoughts) and I found this sentence "Resurrect to a truly new life!". My joy was so great. My December 7 is today. I start again with the whole Opera with a more conscious commitment and a greater love». Her son Marco accompanied his mother with great care and dedication, bringing also the love of the Opera beside her.

## Maria Silvia Machado Freire

«Where there is charity, the love of God is there.» (from the liturgy of Holy Thursday)

On May 22, at the age of 91, Maria Silvia, one of the first married focolarine of Recife (Brazil), reached Heaven.

In 1964 she wrote to Chiara: «I am certain that He, just as he had given me His light, will also give me the grace to be always at the service of my neighbour so that I can be another Mary giving Jesus to humanity».

Mother of eight children, after the death of her husband which happened in '87, Maria Silvia asked Chiara to transform her promises into vows. Even if various illnesses had weakened her, she always maintained the characteristics of simplicity, radicalness, silence and welcome. With her gifts of wisdom she brought a great contribution to the



focolare up to the end, following the life of the Opera with great love and participating in every reality that was born from the Charism.

In 2009 she was diagnosed with Parkinson's Disease, which through the years diminished her ability to move. Even if she was in a wheelchair and then bed-ridden, Maria Silvia always radiated the light of the Ideal.

Before the Holy Week she dreamt that Jesus called her by name; and so she felt that she had to prepare herself better for this meeting with Him. Soon after she was brought to the hospital. In her final moments two focolarini and two of her daughters were by her side. Together they prayed and sang; greeting her they asked her to embrace Mary and Chiara and to entrust the whole Opera to them.

## Antonia Concetta The Di Pietro

«For me to live is Christ» (Phil 1,21)



Antonia, married focolarino of Turin (Italy), reached the Heavenly Mariapolis on June 1 at the age of 85. Born in Ragusa, she met the Ideal in Naples. Together with her husband and their three children they opened their home to both focolares and to the community that was coming to life around them.

They shared with generosity whatever they had and at times shared from what they themselves needed. She became a married focolarina in 1966 and together with her husband Angela, also a focolarino, who left for Heaven in 2000, they moved to Ivrea where they made a great contribution to the life of the Opera there.

«In order to be an authentic child of your charism – she wrote to Chiara in '82 - Jesus is asking me now to place on His altar everything, all that I am... but above all my will. It has not been painless,

but as soon as I took the 'step', I felt Our Lady took me by the hand. I entrusted to her my children, my aging parents. I was very certain of Her love for them ».

In 2000 during the grave illness of her husband, she confided to Chiara: «We feel that this reality that we are living is all Love, all grace... it is a great treasure, something precious to be spent with you and in you to build the Opera One».

Always giving of herself, she followed with great care those entrusted to her for as long as her health permitted, following the adherents with much care. In 2003 she was diagnosed with Parkinson's disease. «The Password of the day is - she wrote to Chiara - was 'Be rooted in the present moment' and I said my unconditional yes to Jesus Forsaken. I went from total darkness to the fullness of joy and everything was filled with light».

When she could no longer be on her own, together with her children, she chose to go to an assisted living home. It was far from the focolare, but each time the focolarini went to visit her and notwithstanding her illness she spread a sense of serenity, with her constant «yes» to Jesus Forsaken.

## Omar Díaz

«The word of the  
cross... is the power  
of God» (1Cor 1,18)

On June 14, Omar, focolarino of the Mariapolis Lia (O'Higgins, Argentina) at only 48 years old, left unexpectedly for Heaven during the night as he slept. He grew up in a family wherein his parents had instilled in him values such as tenacity, will power, and an entrepreneurial spirit. At 18 he participated in the Genfest in Buenos Aires and was conquered by the youth who performed and shared experiences. Omar decided to follow Jesus for the rest of his life.

The following year, his mother died: a great suffering for him which he lived in unity with his "new focolare family". He recognized in this suffering Jesus forsaken. He offered this suffering



to Him «in order to understand clearly my vocation», as he wrote to Chiara.

He decided to spend some time in the Mariapolis O'Higgins. He wrote: «Little by little, God has taken the first place in my life. I offer Him every moment, every renunciation, every suffering, I have placed myself in His hands and have abandoned myself to His service. Chiara, I want to tell you that this is the fruit of Jesus in the midst, fruit of unity in this great big family that is the Movement that has welcomed me with love and where I have found hope and joy».

His next step was to go to Loppiano to the school of formation as a focolarino. He returned to Argentina and spent the next nineteen years

in the zone of Rosario, always filled with the enthusiasm for the life of the Gospel, which he bore witness to with humility, service, coherence of life, open-mindedness, and by being an example both human and supernatural charity for many.

Omar was an educator par excellence and he touched many hearts, formed many consciences as can be seen from the numerous experiences at school and with the gen3. He brought ahead with passion the many projects with the youth, adolescents and adults. Without a doubt his biggest recent contribution was the formation of the youth at the Mariapolis Lia: lately the number is about 200. Omar, his name that Chiara confirmed giving it the meaning of «I can always love», had truly always aimed high!

## Claudia Gisler

*«My beloved is mine  
and I am his» (Songs 2,16)*

Claudia, Swiss focolarina, who was 54 years old, went to meet the Spouse on June 15.

She grew up in a beautiful family with three brothers and a sister, she met the Ideal when she was 14 years old when she participated in a gen3 meeting. She shared: «Something new opened up in me. Their way of living the Gospel was very convincing to me and I, too, desired to love God and to work for unity». She accepted the challenge proposed in those days: to become a saint. When she was nineteen years old she wrote to Chiara: «You put in my heart an immense desire that was not there before - to become a saint as soon as possible ... I want to follow your way, I said my "yes" to God».

In the various focolares in Switzerland where she lived, she was a companion in the journey of many people who found in her a sister, a friend, a mother. From 2009 she was the co-responsible of the Zonetta of Zurich, and she lived this responsibility as a service and always giving of herself.

Sportive, dynamic, full of energy, the unexpected announcement of her illness came two years ago. On her way to a meeting and left a note for the other focolarine: «The Spouse has arrived



dressed for the feast. It is the moment to be strong». Also, when she gave Emmaus the news, she said: «I have a great peace within me which continues. I feel that I am under a particular grace».

She underwent different treatments. It was a period when Claudia did not communicate too much about herself, but was projected outward toward the others to

welcome and make her own whatever was in the heart of the other person. She wrote: «Living this illness is like going to work out of love, always beginning again». She was happy to make this offering, to be the bank of the Opera, for new vocations.

About a year ago she was transferred to the focolare in Baar where she was like a magnet that attracted many, touched by her enlightened and crystalline love. She wrote to me in August of 2011: «The colloquio with the Spouse has become always more intimate: I have understood in a new way that what we pray for in the morning: 'the sufferings of those next to me is my Jesus. It is Jesus, it is mine and so I embrace him, I bring him in close to me and I am happy».

She lived the present moment with intensity, consciously preparing herself for that moment of «passage». Her last days was a flight towards God.

# Theresia (Maria Novella) Kuppens

*«For I say to you, that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the scribes and the Pharisees, you shall not enter the kingdom of heaven» (Mt 5,20)*

Maria Novella, a 76 year-old Belgian focolarina died peacefully surrounded by the focolarine in an atmosphere of Paradise. Ever since her youth, Theresia wished to go to Heaven on a Saturday, the day dedicated to Our Lady.

Maria Novella – the new name that Chiara gave her – met the Ideal through a colleague, and at 24 years old, even if her family did not understand, she left for Italy in order to know more about the spirituality of the Movement. Getting to know more about the Opera she felt the call to follow God in the focolare and she goes to Loppiano for her formation. wanted to give her life for unity.

She was gifted with a great sense of practicality, creativity and an unshakable faith in providence she remained in the Cittadella to begin «Fantasy» a small business which gave work to the focolarine of the School. She was soon transferred to Montet (Switzerland) as part of the first team to set up the «Centre Art». She had the art of creating something beautiful out of very little and to motivate the young focolarine to develop their sense of creativity and responsibility.

After some years still in Loppiano she left for the Little City of O'Higgins in Argentina in 1992. She wrote from there: «My weakness overshadows me, but I want to be where Chiara wants me to be. Now I feel like a child without fears and full of trust in the hands of the Father».

She returned to Belgium and sometime later was diagnosed with Parkinson's disease. After a period of strong trials there was unleashed in her a completely new docility to God and to the brother, allowing herself to be loved especially when she



had to depend on the others. Also her mental faculties are affected notwithstanding this she takes heroic steps to love Jesus Forsaken. When she is able to articulate a phrase, it was always a message that converted the others. Even though she had great physical suffering, she edified everyone, also the personnel of the hospice center. Once a focolarina asked her, «Do you feel that we are with you?» and with a clarity that was unusual for her she answered: «This is why I am so happy».

## Elisabeth Speck

*«I am in the race!»*

Focolarina of Hamburg (Germany), Elisabeth reached Heaven on June 11 at 90 years old.

When she was in the focolare in Munich (during the '70s), Chiara, asked her to take care of the Bishop's residence in Berlin, upon the request of a Cardinal. Elisabeth accepted this responsibility with love and even if her profession was as a nutritional chemist, she dedicated herself to the service of the deacon and to doing household tasks: «I have returned to my first love – she wrote to Chiara – Jesus Forsaken. Yes, I am in the race!».

In 1991 the Deacon retired, and so Elisabeth must answer to another emergency: to take care of her disabled brother who lives on the island where she too was born: Fehmarn, in the Baltic Sea. From there she maintained strong contact with the focolare and often she would arrive with a big backpack full of the Providence given to her by the people of the island.

After her brother died she moved to Hamburg and also here, and here too, inspite of her diminishing strength and to the progressive loss of her eyesight, she continued her commitment to love every neighbour who passed beside her. Due to her disability she entered into hospice care, often visited by the focolarine with whom she shared the state of



her soul and with them passed through important moments of her «holy journey». She wrote to Emmaus: «I want to adhere to what you said about sanctity. I depend on others almost entirely for everything, but I try to see His Will also in this and try to live it ».

After a fall, Elisabeth can no longer walk. She, whom all her life was very dynamic, found herself confined to a wheelchair. Embracing this suffer-

ing, she strived to live the present moment with all of her being.

Two months ago she had a stroke, from which she never recovered. Like Jesus on the cross, she continued saying her “yes” with great inner peace. In her last days the focolarine were always at her side accompanying her up to the moment wherein Jesus called her to Him. «*Oportet semper orare* (It is good to pray always)» (Lk 18,1) was her Word of life.

## sr. Benedetta Carnovali

*«Do not be afraid, I have conquered the world!» (Jn 16,33)*

A religious of Mary the Child, she left for the heavenly Mariapolis last May 31 at the age of 90, assisted by her fellow sisters and surrounded by the focolarine of Bangkok who had brought her a message from Emmaus. Originally from Italy (province of Como) she had always been a missionary in Asia. In 1963, when she was passing through a crisis in her vocation, while she was in Myanmar (formerly Burma) she met the Ideal from a religious priest and from that moment on her greatest desire was to live it and to share it with as many people as possible.

The fruits came immediately. In the group of girls she was forming as catechists, two of them – even if neither Sr. Benedetta nor them have ever visited a focolare - felt the call to follow God as focolarine. The girls, since they were not allowed to leave the country due to the communist regime, put on wedding rings pretending to look for their husbands and travelling through the jungle, after three months under the sun and the rain, without almost eating, they arrived at the border of Thailand. From there they were able to reach Bangkok and to obtain passports to go to Loppiano.



Even if she was far from the focolare and with limited means, Sr. Benedetta always found the way to maintain a close contact with the Opera, especially with Chiara who once, together with Fr. Foresi, even accompanied her to the Vatican to meet with a personality of the Church. And when, years later, Chiara visited Thailand, it was Sr. Benedetta who served as her translator.

Wherever she was transferred, Sr. Benedetta formed a group with whom she shared the spirituality of unity, even organizing small Mariapolises. The first Thai gen boy who later became a focolarino grew up in one of these groups.

In the online edition you will find a touching interview with him and other facts of her long life illuminated by the Ideal which Sr. Benedetta understood in all its significance and, thanks to this, she found once again the freshness of the Charism in her own foundresses.

On the 60° anniversary of her consecration to God (2009), she wrote to Vale Ronchetti (one of the first focolarine, now in Paradise, who used to follow the women religious in the Opera): «Let us thank God together, especially for the gift of the Ideal. September 20 is the day that Chiara wrote: “I have only one Spouse on earth”. A coincidence which makes me very happy. A give back to him all the love that He has given me in all these years and also I give him my unfaithfulness. In His embrace I find peace».

*Elena Oum*

# Christian Reyes

«Gesù, lasciami morire per te»

«Jesus, let me die for you»

Gen2 of the community of Santiago Rodriguez (Dominican Republic) Christian went to Heaven on March 26 at the age of 27, just three days before his graduation as a civil engineers. In spite of suffering a chronic illness for many years, he was a young person full of energy, happy, generous, always ready to serve - without counting the cost - all those who were in need.

In 2007 he wrote to Chiara: «The Trinity, Jesus, you, the Movement... they are the motor that pushes me everyday to get up and to smile, just as you taught me to do». And in one of his



writings addressed to Jesus in 2014 he confided: «In this Holy Week I give myself to you, believing in your love with which you became nothings for each one of us. Jesus let me die for you. May you be my Cyrene and carry the cross of my family and of all the people around me. But even more, help me to endure my heavy cross».

With his sense of humour he would play down even the most difficult moments, bringing peace to everyone up to the point of forgetting about the suffering. Whoever went to visit him in the hospital was touched by the peace he transmitted.

Enrico Donzelli

# Manuela Ramogida Scaramella

«Together we can»

Manuela, from the Zonetta of Lazio north (Italy), left for the heavenly Mariapolis on May 10, at just 41 years old. She met the Ideal as a teenager and soon after became a gen. Married to Giuseppe, also belonging to the Ideal, she felt that God was calling her to follow Him and

so she began her formation as a married focolarina. As a couple they gave themselves intensely in the community and at the service of others, above all for the new generations.

In 2000 Manuela felt the first symptoms of a certain illness - which at first was benign - that brought her to undergo numerous and delicate surgical operations. A journey that lasted 15 years, rooted in the love for Jesus Forsaken, with



moments of light and of steps forward, always shared with Chiara who from the start thanked her «for her love for Jesus that bears much fruit».

The final surge upward began last autumn, when the doctors had «laid down their arms». From then on a chain of love began on the part of the whole community, that went ahead unabated and which for her was her lifeblood.

There were many moments of darkness when she was unable to find meaning in such a life... but they were always followed by moments of light that brought back her tenacity, courage, passion to root herself in the present moment repeating: «Together we can do it, together we can».

During the final days a crowd of people passed her bedside to greet her, to thank her... and everyone left regenerated by her love.

The funeral was a celebration, almost a mariapolis because of the numerous presence of everyone in the neighbourhood. The testimonies of many whom she had loved, made us discover her in all her splendid beauty: harmony, transparency, strength and determination, freshness and purity of heart, truth, finesse: this is who our Manuela was!

Margherita Zoncapè



## Nelda Pagliari

*A smile that gave joy*

Nelda was born July 16, 2006 in the province of Mantua (Italy), only and much-awaited daughter of Mama Alessandra and Papa Giovanni who had her when they were of a mature age. She grew up in a huge colonial ancestral home, in a healthy, simple environment rich in love and values. She was a happy child, always with a luminous smile on her face which brought joy to many.

For around three years she attended the gen4 meetings. At Christmas she loved to decorate the statue of Baby Jesus and with the other gen she went to offer it to people along the various streets of their city's center, to remind the adults who the true celebrant of the season. She loved to play roles in the skits through which the gen4 boys and girls learned about catechism and they would use them to teach the smaller ones: an activity that helped her to overcome the shyness typical of her age. With Celeste, her classmate, they shared about the «dice of love» to their teacher and their other classmates. Everytime they threw the dice in their class many acts of love fell like snowflakes.

On May 13, while she was riding her bicycle with her mother, Nelda was hit by a car. The emergency treatment and the two operations she underwent during the night were useless: the next morning Jesus took her with him. Her most beloved parents allowed her corneas to be donated. At the funeral, with her classmates present, they had to set-up two loudspeakers in the churchyard because the whole town came to unite themselves around her family.

*Daniela Fiorani*

## sr. Davina (Gina) Rizzi

*«Love always, be the first to love, love everyone»*

From Vicenza, she entered the Elizabethan Religious Congregation at 17 years old, dedicating herself to teaching and scholastic direction in North Italy and in Calabria. There she met the spirituality of Chiara and immediately she launched herself in living it and sharing it to youth and families, organizing meetings or supporting the gen activities. In a Congress she met Vale Ronchetti, one of the first companions of Chiara, with whom she establishes a profound relationship through frequent correspondence. In almost every letter she



would include a contribution for the communion of goods: gifts received from relatives or friends. In 1987 she wrote to Vale: «It is always a great joy to meet you all even if just through letters. This has not been possible lately (she had an operation) but I felt the presence and the power of the unity of everyone. I thank you with all my heart for the Mariapolis Newsletter and the Collegamento that I always punctually receive». In October 2001: «Reading *The Cry* sustains me day by day. Even when the trials are hard and the misunderstandings unconceivable, Jesus Forsaken gives me new strength to go ahead, to continue...». In that same month she is transferred to the Mother House, «I still don't know what my responsibility will be, but whatever my service will be, the first thing is: to love always – to be the first to love – to love everyone», she wrote us.

In the final years she took care of the elderly nuns, in particular a blind sister. Sr. Davina knew how to describe to her so well all the things – shared her co-religious – «it seemed as if I could really see them». Every month she would personally distribute to all the staff of the house 42 cop-

ies of the Word of life. Until she could still walk she participated in focolare meetings. On February 10, at 99 years old, she went to meet the Spouse.

Her superiors wrote of her: «The sisters who have had her as their superior recall how much she cared for their spiritual life and of her commitment in creating fraternal relationships within the community. In her final years, marked by illness, she carried her suffering with dignity offering them «for the good of the Church and of the Institute».

*sr. Antonia Moiola*

## Emma Rufener

*Jesus Forsaken her anchor*

Emma was born in a villare of the Vallese, in Switzerland, in 1925. She had six little brothers. Belonging to a poor family, during the summer she would bring the cows out to the fields, she would milk them and she made cheese, during winter she worked in a hotel in the tourist area of Saas-Fee. Then when her parents got sick, she remained at home to take care of them.

As soon as she met the Movement, she immediately understood its spirit and made of her own, soon after she became a Volunteer.

Emma was a loving, generous, simple and silent. She never missed going to the annual meeting in Rome and in order to have the money to go she would make some handicrafts and jams to sell. With her being she transmitted the love of God around her. She had made Jesus Forsaken as her anchor in her everyday life.

To listen to the collegamento live, she would travel for threehours every month up to Berne returning home the next day, carrying in her heart the realities of the Opera and the joy of having lived with Jesus in the midst in the focolare.

After a meeting at the Center she wrote: «I said my total "yes" to God again and chose Jesus Forsaken once again so as to be a nothingness of love. To be Mary is a reality that came to me very

strongly. I want to go ahead in the "holy journey" with the whole Opera, allowing Jesus to live in me, in such a way that it is Him who will act, because the road to unity passes through the brother. This is why I have to re-convert myself everyday».



The one in-charge of her nucleo shared: «When I would visit her we usually took a short walk. And this is we were doing that November 24, 2014, walking arm in arm, when Emma had a heart attack and died in my arms. Silently and meekly she ended her race».

*Marianne Rentsch*

## Our relatives

**Maria, mother of Maria Magerl**, focolarina in Vienna; **Franca, mother of Marco Aquini**, focolarino at the Roman Mariapolis; **Marie-Claude, sister of Anne Plantard**, focolarina in Madagascar; **Marienza, mother of Mauro Peirone**, focolarino in Milano; **Antonio, father of Angelo Di Nardo**, focolarino in Lazio North; **Piergiorgio, father of Claudio Greselin**, focolarino in Tirana (Albania); **Sumaili Bisibo Emilie, mother of Paul Kisyaba**, focolarino in Bobo-Dioulasso (Burkina-Faso); **Giuseppina, mther of Paola Cipollone**, and **Regina, mother of Ana Maria Fons**, focolarine at the Roman Mariapolis; **Martha, mother of Fred Ngoran**, focolarino in Bamenda (Camerun); the brother of **Petronilla (Fedele) Pun**, focolarina in Macao.

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