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MARIAPOLI

Notiziario del movimento dei focolari

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Synod

**The Good News
is for Everyone**

*The 50th anniversary
of Vatican Council II*

**The Council Event
and the
Focolare Movement**

Delegates of the Opera

**Our prospect:
"May they all be one"**

Love comprises faith

If your faith is the size of a mustard seed you will say to this mountain, "Move from here to there," and it will move; nothing will be impossible for you.' (Matt 17,19)

To be able to live this Word in the present moment, to be this word in the present moment, I live believing and acting in such a way that every 'mountain' within me and around me moves away and the Holy Spirit comes instead of it.

(...)

So, I detach myself from everything, moment by moment, even from God for God, by living Jesus forsaken as my goal

for the present moment.

Jesus Forsaken is the Word: each Word is Him.

Faith is love. He who believes, loves. Just like the one who knows, loves, Have faith so as to move a mountain, and love doing that. I love to move the mountain inside me so that God, the Holy Spirit lives within me.

But I want – all day long – to move every mountain I encounter in the soul of my brother or brothers. I burn them out with love.

This means: I want that burden, that abandonment, that mountain and I believe (and I love) moving it away.

One has to presume that it doesn't exist, because he who loves does not see any obstacle.

And I will move it away.

I must have only one thing at heart: loving. And put this love at the basis of everything. And so I will live my day moving away all mountains and enkindling all souls.



On the 11th October, Pope Benedict XVI inaugurated the Year of Faith in St Peter's Square during a solemn celebration.

The writing of Chiara published here dates back to December 1949. It seems especially suitable for this event which will accompany us all through the year. In fact, it was during the special period in Summer 1949 that Chiara understood "better many truths of faith", that Love contains, comprises faith.

¹ First published in La Via dated 10 December 1949. Then in La Parola di Dio, by F. Gillet, Città Nuova, Rome 2011, p. 35-36.

² Cf. Il grido, Città Nuova, Roma 2000, p. 55.

Chiara

The 1949 Pact in the experience of Chiara Lubich Interdisciplinary Studies.

"Abba School Studies" is the title of the new series launched by Città Nuova: it aims at being a cultural and multidisciplinary expression of the Study Centre of the Focolare Movement, which was desired and founded by Chiara Lubich, "to explain and formulate the doctrine which is contained in the charism of unity".

The series will publish "Paradise 1949" texts by Chiara and studies of the members of the Abba School inspired by those texts and which aim at showing that the light of the charism is endowed with a significant cultural value, that it involves a variety of disciplines and can influence the civil and ecclesial environment deeply, renewing it from within.

It also seeks to be an expression of the intense communion in life and thought that is a characteristic of the Abba School, as Chiara herself taught in the great number of years in which she headed the School.

All the studies published, therefore, though having one author, can be considered as the result of the contribution of all the members of the School.

The first volume, *The 1949 Pact in the experience of Chiara Lubich. Interdisciplinary Studies*, was really appreciated by the Delegates of the Zones who were at Rocca di Papa for their annual meeting.

The opening of the book is the narration Chiara herself made of the 1949 Pact, of what preceded the event and the effects it had: it is an especially precious text since it relates the beginnings of the mystical experience which she went through "on the mountain" in the 1949-1950 period and in which she involved Foco and her first companions immediately.

A series of significant notes Chiara herself made about this text make up an integral part of it. The text will be published in its unedited version.

The twelve studies which follow, prepared by the Abba School - which involve different disciplines ranging from the theological to the humanistic and scientific fields - offer an implementation of the Pact of unity in the history of today.



Alba Sgariglia



The 50th anniversary of the II Vatican Council

Links between Vatican Council II and the Focolare Movement are deep-seated and still need to be discovered in many ways.

"I can see that you follow, that auto-definition the Church made of itself in Vatican Council II, in a very authentic manner ", Pope John Paul II had said when he visited the Centre of the Opera in Rocca di Papa on 19th August 1984. In fact the links between the Council and the Focolare Movement are deep-seated and still need to be discovered.

Vatican Council II: towards a new Pentecost

The summons of an ecumenical Council, a plenary assembly of all the Bishops, announced by Blessed John XXIII on 25 January 1959 took everyone by surprise.

The task of Vatican council II (another Vatican Council had already been held in 1869-70) was to reflect on many issues raised by the contemporary world

and in the light of all that update life in the Church and the presentation of faith so as to put today's mankind in contact with the reviving energies of the Gospel. John XXIII hoped that a "new Pentecost" would emerge out of it.

The solemn opening of Vatican Council II - the 21st universal Council in the history of the Catholic Church - took place on 11th October 1962. Paul VI, who was elected pope in June 1963 carried on the works of the Council and concluded it on the 8th December 1965.

The Bishops who participated in the four sessions of the council numbered 2540. More than 480 theologians/experts, male and female auditors, together with representatives of the Orthodox and Reformed Churches took part.

The documents of Vatican II are 16, four of which are constitutions. The main topics are three and they are particularly linked to one another:

the life of the Church which includes Liturgy (Sacrosanctum Concilium Constitution), The Church as the People of God (Lumen Gentium Constitution); the Churches having Oriental rites; life and apostolate of the lay faithful; life of the consecrated; ministry of Bishops; ministry and life of priests and their formation; the opening of the Church towards a universal dialogue, starting off with a deeper understanding of the Revelation (Dei Verbum Constitution); ecumenical

dialogue and inter-faith dialogue; freedom of religion; missionary activity;

the relationship of the Church with the contemporary world (Gaudium et Spes), with particular attention given to certain themes (means of social communication, education).

Benedict XVI called for a renewed contact with the Council, on the occasion of its 50th anniversary for he is convinced that the Council documents contain "an immense heritage for the new

Jesus in the midst and the Council

But there is a great event, the greatest one, which takes place from time to time in the Church: the Ecumenical Council.

It's institution was not divine, "in spite of this – the theologian Congar said – (in the Council) a certain structure exists and the Lord has freely united Himself to it by making a formal promise: "...I am with you always; yes, to the end of time." (Mt 28,20) "For where two or three meet in my name, I am there among them" (Mt18,20) [...]» [...].

The Fathers of the Church are, in fact, staunch supporters of the presence of Jesus in the midst of the Bishops in the Councils, and therefore the Council is the great focolare of the Church where Jesus transmits His light abundantly to illuminate the centuries which follow.

Cyril of Alexandria said: "...Even those famous Fathers who, one day met at Nicaea, attempted to follow the footsteps (of the Apostles), when they established the venerable and universal symbol of faith (the Creed of the Church; e.d.). Assuredly, Christ himself sat with them: "Where two or three are gathered in my name, I am amongst them" [...]

And John from Chrysostom, to a Hebrew, wrote: "Be careful about what you're doing, when you condemn many renowned Fathers (of the Council of Nicaea) who were so strong and wise ... Haven't you heard of the words of Christ: " where two or three meet in my name, I am there among them"? Because, if where two or three meet, Christ is in the midst (of them), where three hundred and even more met he was undoubtedly present and He directed and decided everything".

Chiara Lubich

Excerpt from: Dove due o tre (1976) in Gesù in mezzo e la vita della Chiesa (Scritti spirituali/3), Città Nuova, Rome 1979, p. 193-195



Piazza San Pietro 1963. Durante i lavori del Concilio

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A Living Church at the school of the Holy Spirit

"I feel more than ever in duty bound to point to the Council as the great grace bestowed on the Church in the 20th century: there we find a sure compass by which to take our bearings in the century now beginning" (Apostolic Letter, *Novo Millennio Ineunte*, n. 57).



Piazza San Pietro 11 ottobre 2012.
Benedetto XVI col Patriarca Bartolomeo I

"It was a unique experience for me: after all the excitement and enthusiasm of the preparations, I could see a living Church (...) which set herself to learn at the school of the Holy Spirit, the true driving force of the Council". (Benedict XVI, General audience, 10 October 2012)

"Recent decades have seen the advance of a spiritual "desertification" (...) But it is in starting from the experience of this desert,

from this void, that we can again discover (...) the value of what is essential for living; thus in today's world there are innumerable signs, often expressed implicitly or negatively, of the thirst for God, for the ultimate meaning of life. And in the desert people of faith are needed who, with their own lives, point out the way to the Promised Land and keep hope alive. (Benedict XVI, Celebration 50th anniversary of the Opening of the Council, 11 October 2012)

"This transforming milestone, the opening of the Second Vatican Council, was inspired by the fundamental reality that the Son and incarnate Logos of God is " ... where two or three are gathered in his name" (Mt18,20) and that the Spirit, who proceeds from the Father, " ... will guide us into the whole truth" (Jn16,13)". (Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew I, St. Peter's Square, 11 October 2012).

Christian generations" which can make them rediscover "the beauty of being Christian, of being the Church, of living that big "us" that Jesus formed around him to evangelize the world".

The 50th anniversary of Vatican Council II: in what way can the Movement contribute towards its celebration

How can we contribute, through the charism of unity, to go deeper into Vatican II and put its teachings into practice to celebrate its 50th anniversary, at a time when Christian faith is facing so many difficulties and the Church risks finding itself, quite a few times, on the "defensive" ? How can we live this anniversary, which, in reality will last four years, just like the Council itself lasted? And how can we communicate, through our means of communication, the manifold experience that the Movement has gone through in relation with the documents of the Council?

On last 4th and 5th June, a consultation meeting was held in Ariccia (Rome), organized by the Gen's magazine and the counselors for the Indigo of the Opera with 41 participants: 17 experts, 11 editors and communication staff of the Opera (Città Nuova, Press Service, Web site, Gen's and Unità e carismi magazine) 8 people responsible for the branches of the Opera which are directly involved in the ecclesial environment (priests, gens, male and female religious, Bishops and the Parish and Diocesan Movements) together with Giancarlo Faletti and the counsellors for the Indigo and the Violet of the Opera. Emmaus had ensured all of them her unity.

In reality, it was only the start of this endeavour, and it was dedi-

cated to the Council as a whole, to the Year of Faith and to the first document of the Council, the one about Liturgy. In the coming years a study of some of the ample themes of the Council will be carried out.

From the very start of the meeting it emerged that the core of Vatican II had been a new presence of Jesus in the history of today's man and that studying the Council does not only signify knowing and implementing its teachings, but living above all such an experience of the Risen Lord which is capable of overcoming any kind of limit. This makes it necessary for the People of God not only to open up to have a full range 360° dialogue but also the issue which implies improving in living trinitarian dynamics which are the nature of His People and which cannot help influencing such crucial fields like the role of lay people and especially women, synodality (that is a shared guidance of the ecclesial community) the relationship between state and church, etc.

The contributions of the experts highlighted the fact that an important contribution in this sense could be given by the charismatic part of the Church, and this is the case of the chari-

sm of unity, especially thanks to its two founding points "Jesus in the midst" and "Jesus forsaken" which not only help to achieve the Church as communion but they urge her forward towards every human being.

The discussions which took place during the two-day seminar were lively and endowed with light and they led to the outline of some shared prospects which we then sent to Emmaus: during the year dedicated to the love of our brother consider the possibility of going deeper into the vision of the Council gave of a church which is open to a full 360° dialogue and how, thanks to the Ideal, we put it into practice; the possibility of organizing a Symposium in 2013-2014 about the Church in the light of the Lumen Gentium; the opportunity to establish a shared editorial and communications strategy for the the 50th anniversary years of celebration (2012-2015); the urgency to divulge the Council among young people once again; the desire to have the collaboration of the Abba School and the Sophia University in this project.

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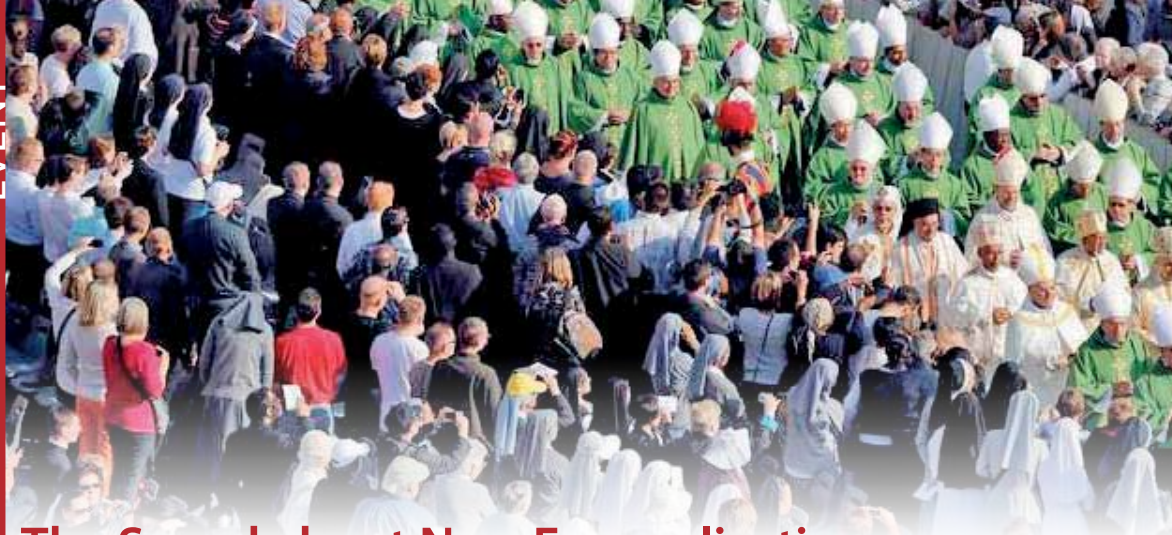
UPM Courses about Vatican Council II

In the coming three years the Università Popolare Mariana (UPM), besides promoting the theological study of the points of the spirituality, intends holding a course about Vatican II for the permanent formation of the internal members of the Movement.

The opening lecture will offer a historical background of the event and will give all those who did not live this experience first-hand the opportunity to get to know the cultural, social and ecclesial context in which it took place, a period of time which was visibly touched by the breath of the Holy Spirit. The teachings of the Council can be discovered or re-discovered in all their validity today.

Another lesson will be about the Liturgy Constitution (Sacrosanctum Concilium). This document had started off the liturgy reform which had had a great impact at the time for it offered all lay people the possibility to participate in a much more active manner - even thanks to the translation of Latin texts into local languages - in every liturgical celebration.

This project will be continued in the following years and comprises the study of the Constitutions about the Church (Lumen Gentium) and about the Church in the contemporary world (Gaudium et Spes). Other Council documents, which are particularly interesting since they deal with the specific goals of the charism of unity, will also be taken into consideration.



The Synod about New Evangelization The Good News is for Everyone

Openness, mutual esteem, bishops who are “protagonists collectively”, lay people and movements “At the Synod I lived the experience of the Church as communion”, this is how Maria Voce summarized her views on *Avvenire* on the 30th October.

One of the reasons why this Synod will be remembered is its tight link with the 50th anniversary of the IInd Vatican Council. The Council and the Synod are bound by the same goal: proclaiming the Gospel to the world today. To whom? How? Basically to the people who – as Benedict XVI recalled – though they were baptized, they have moved away from the Church, obviously without forgetting about those who have not received the Good News yet.

262 Synodal Fathers – the highest number ever - 45 experts and 49 auditors, men and women who conveyed the living experience of lay people and were chosen amongst many specialists and people involved in evangelization in all five continents. Emmaus was one of them and she addressed the assembly on the 17th October, Marco Impagliazzo (Sant’Egidio), Fran-

co Miano (Catholic Action), Salvatore Martinez (Charismatic Renewal) and Chiara Amiranterante (New Horizons). Ernestine Sikujua Kinyabuuma from the Democratic Repu-

An interview with Emmaus

“It seems to me a reason for great joy to acknowledge all of us as being the Church” Emmaus said in an interview about the Synod for Vatican Radio. “Even the pastors tend to realize this more and more, but I also think it is important to respect the specific features of the charisms that each and everyone brings forth because they are gifts of God and they cannot be mixed up in an indifferent manner. At the same time one needs to bear in mind that these gifts serve to build the whole thing and therefore that specific gift that the Focolare Movement or S. Egidio Community, or the charism of the Bishop offers has to integrate with all the other charisms to build the body of Christ which is the Church. I think that we still have to go some way to reach this objective.”

This is a task which needs to be carried out in the



public of Congo e Gisèle Muchati from Syria, members of Focolare also participated.

A number of fraternal delegates of other Christian Churches were present.

The special guests were: frère Alois, prior of Taizé, rev. Lamar Vest, from the United States, president of the American Bible Society e Werner Arber, Nobel Prize for Medicine in 1978, protestant, president of the Pontifical Academy of Sciences. Besides the habitual speakers there was also one who spoke in Arabic.

The Challenges

"A sign of New Evangelization are the ecclesial Movements and the New communities which are a great blessing for the Church today" cardinal Donald W. Wuerl, the General Relator of the Synod said when he emphasized the importance of

lay people in Evangelization. And Card. Rylko, in his speech on the 10th October, underlined the contribution given by the Movements: "The missionary urge of the new realities does not emerge from emotional and superficial enthusiasm but it springs up from some very serious and demanding experiences of formation that the lay faithful undergo to reach mature faith which is capable of being an adequate answer for the challenges posed by secularism".

A greater awareness of the fact that fruitful evangelization is linked with complete and visible communion among the Churches. The presence of the Patriarch of Constantinople, Bartholomew I and of the Primate of the Anglican Communion, Rowan Williams stood out in the assembly and Benedict XVI opened the Year of Faith



17 ottobre 2012.
L'intervento di Emmaus al Sinodo

ecclesial community but also outside the Church, that is towards non believers ...

"Certainly. Even a person who does not have any religious principles or does not acknowledge them has, undoubtedly, something to offer. In this sense I feel that lay people have the specific feature of reaching out for people, not those who go to church, but those who are outside the Church and are looking for an answer for their quest about the meaning of life that every man has. We witness the Gospel through love and nobody remains untouched by love, nobody refuses to be loved! When a relationship of love is established it is easy then to move from to love to truth".

In a world where man seeking spirituality today frequently ends up by embracing a solution of religious syncretism, establishing a dialogue with other religions is a challenge in which you've been successful, even though you remain rooted in your own identity ...

"It's hard to say that we have been successful, it is always an attempt that we have made and keep making over and over. But it is true that we are keen on being what we are and the people who invite us know they are inviting Christians, they know that we are based on this fundamental rock and they appreciate us because of it".

What are your wishes for the Year of Faith which has just opened?

"We must hope because of what has emerged from this Synod: the desire to announce our faith once more through love, while being aware of the numerous mistakes we might have committed in the past but without being afraid because Jesus is still with us now".

Excerpts from the interview of Paolo Ondarza to Emmaus for Vatican Radio, broadcast on 17 October. .Other interview on

<http://www.focolare.org/area-press-focus/it/news/category/segnalazioni/>

on the 11 October with them.

The words of Bartholomew I, in St. Peter's Square, had a great impact on all present: "In the current turmoil of violence, separation, and brokenness that is escalating between peoples and nations, may the love and desire for harmony we profess here, and the understanding we seek through dialogue and mutual respect, serve as a model for our world".

Archbishop Williams – in his rich and



San Peter Square 11 ottobre 2012.
Benedetto XVI with l'Arcivescovo R. Williams

elaborate study of the topic from an Anglican point of view – insisted that an authentic evangelization initiative will always be an evangelization that starts off from ourselves, that is from the reason why our faith is essential for us. Places like Taizé e Bose foster an ever-increasing importance in the world today and so do "great spiritual networks like Sant' Egidio, the Focolare Movement, Comunione e Liberazione". Rowan Williams also quoted Chiara Lubich because – he recalled – "the

basic imperative – in her spirituality – was 'to make yourself one' – one with the crucified and abandoned Christ, one through him with the Father, one with all those called to this unity and so one with the deepest needs of the world". It's only if one is at such heights, that we can make the Gospel of Christ "compellingly attractive to men and women of our age".

Synodos: walking together

In a short improvised address at the end of lunch on the 12th October, Benedict XVI said: "Crowning the Synod with a lunch together is a lovely tradition started by the Blessed John Paul II. For me it is a great joy to have on my right His Holiness Patriarch Bartholomaios, Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople and, on my other side, Archbishop Rowan Williams of the Anglican Communion.

For me this communion is a sign that we are on the path toward unity and that in our hearts we are moving forward. The Lord will help us to move forward, in an exterior way too. This joy, it seems to me, might also give us strength in the mandate of evangelization. Synodus means a "shared walk", "walking together", and so the word synodus makes me think of the famous walk of the Lord with the two disciples who were going to Emmaus (published in Osservatore Romano 14 October 2012).

compiled by Gianna Sibelli

Other interviews and write-ups about the Synod are available on www.focolare.org

We recommend the "Message to the People of God" divulged at the conclusion of the Synod

<http://www.focolare.org/area-press-focus/it/news/category/segnalazioni/>



The meeting of the Delegates of the Opera

Widening our prospects

The "workshops" which was started off during the meeting of the delegates of the Opera at Rocca di Papa call for shared responsibility at all levels.

When the month of September nears and the delegates of the Opera in the Zones come to the Centre, it seems as if all the focolare Movement moved to Rocca di Papa, even though the life of the communities in the various territories does not halt. It is an important period in the life of that year, where all the achievements are delivered, joys and sorrow shared, and an evaluation of the past year is drawn up. Then, at the end of the meeting, they leave with new prospects for the current year, strengthened by the experience of communion on a global scale they go through and which is capable of annihilating geographical distances and enforcing that sense of being "Opera", notwithstanding the Zone in which one lives, is about to leave from or is moving to.

We are undergoing a phase of change and not only for many delegates. It's all the Opera which is at stake, in its diverse expressions and more so in putting the Ideal into practice: an Ideal which is always the same as far as inspiration and content are concerned but always on the move in its practical application. To find answers for new questions, one must look for adequate replies and therefore be able to challenge

one's own certainties, which means never be satisfied, never feeling comfortable, never sheltered by "we have always gone about it in this way".

The characteristic of the three week meeting could be called dialogue about important topics: dialogue about the identity of the focolarini and their geographic distribution, dialogue about young people after the Genfest, dialogue about the new setup of the Opera in the Zones, about the urge towards our goal "May they all be one".

Giancarlo Faletti talked about the "workshop" and he referred to it as a methodology which is habitually used at the Centre of the Opera and which is applied successfully "because it is the term that expresses briefly and in the best manner, such an experience. The term workshop, first of all, wants to imply unity; it also means lots of work. Therefore, the walls of this place have witnessed a lot of work, not only during the various moments, the various meetings at the Centre of the Opera, of the General Council, but through the methodology which is a classical one even in the Church: the Commissions".

Let's have a look at how we can "ac-

company" the work in progress in many areas, the path which awaits us, on which to tread this year in the light of what emerged from the 13th September to 6th October at Rocca di Papa..

Young People and Genfest

The Genfest event was something which, as we have already written in our previous edition, was beneficial for all the Opera, for young people who gained courage and for adults who could see their trust in young people strengthened. "What did Genfest make us realize? Emmaus asked – The future is guaranteed! It showed us a second generation that has embraced the Ideal as a whole, that is capable of putting it into practice, of witnessing it, of proclaiming it, of making it move ahead.

God, through all this is telling us: "Don't be afraid! Don't be afraid if the focolarini diminish; don't be afraid if you have to close up some focolari! There are hundreds, thousands of young people who are there, who don't want anything else but to carry on what you started. And the new athletes of unity will emerge out of these young people. Therefore don't worry, keep calm!"

But there is also a call for responsibility on behalf of all the Opera because "we have to be careful not to let all this marvelous grace of Genfest get wasted". So what needs to be done with young people in the zones? Projects have to be drawn up with young people, in accordance with the global project which emerged at the Genfest, and where the projects linked to the zones need to be inserted.

"Help the gen in these projects, but I'd rather say: let the gen and the young people act, because they know how to go about it". As far as adults are concerned,



offer all the support which is necessary in an atmosphere of reciprocity "and not of paternalism" trying to "organize life of the Opera in the zones in such a way that young people can see this life as something possible, and not as something which is very strange, abnormal and which they do not feel they want to embrace; therefore have a greater possibility to spend time together, to enjoy some healthy entertainment together"; and as far as the gen are concerned make an effort to "move towards young people".

The focolarini and the Opera

At the meeting of the delegates this year ample time was dedicated to reflect about the vocation of the focolarini. This task also involved the General Council and therefore all the other branches of the movement. In reality, the important point was that "all the Opera – Emmaus underlined – all together we have studied the vocation of the focolarina, the focolarino, and we have discovered its importance, its beauty and that it's indispensable for all the Opera". And obviously the difficulties, the weaknesses which require a solution also emerged. Where should we start off? By making relationships a priority. "Start off with love for your neighbor – the President suggested -. When put into practice this means loads of things. For





example: it means valuing everyone's contribution, whether big or small; it means acknowledging and accepting one's limits, one's own limits and the limits of others, and helping one another to be able to give everything to God, but "everything" that each one of us has and that is different for each one of us, spiritually and humanly speaking". And then bear in mind two essential dimensions of the vocation of the focolarino and focolarina, which we cannot do without; living with Jesus in the midst and the vocation for "may they all be one". "If the focolarino who lives with Jesus in the midst, does not have his heart wide open to all mankind and therefore he cannot live for mankind, this is another essential dimension for the vocation of the focolarino, and if it fails the vocation of the focolarino itself is in danger".

The message is clear: addressing the issue of the focolarini does not mean that the Opera is looking inwards, as if it were almost concentrated on its supporting framework. It has nothing to do with all this: if we want to strengthen the columns of the building it's because the house has to be enlarged to host an ever growing family. The prospect is "May they all be one" and nothing less.

Made for "May they all be one"

During the meeting, Emmaus told the delegates from India: "One of the things I liked in what you wrote is 'helping the people of the movement to move away from the idea that the Ideal is a gift for them personally to the idea that they are the means to pass on this gift to others'. It seems to me that it is really positive not only for focolarini and focolarine but for adherents, for those who want to live the Ide-

al. It's right to be grateful to God for the gift we have received and say: "God has made this gift to me" and therefore I feel privileged. But we cannot stop there; a gift of God is never only for us. This is something which applies to all the Opera, that should always have this tendency and it applies to every person, practically speaking".

"It's not enough to have an increase in the numbers of our statistics – she said at another session – it's not enough to have had one more Mariapolis (...) What is enough then? It's enough to have our heart set forth towards the "Ut Omnes".

Even after 70 years from the start of the movement the time for sowing has not finished yet. And if during the sixties ships left taking the "focolarini to those who were farthest away" as the lyrics of a popular song of time read, the same effects take place today in a different manner. "When you consider all the dialogues that open up: the dialogue with other Movements up to the dialogue with those who do not profess any religious faith. Undoubtedly, if you think but to achieve all this we need more focolari, you'll say: "We can't make it!". But if you think: "to achieve all this we need more love that we'll put in the hearts of each person, of those who are already there, to love all the people they meet", my goodness! I think that such a revolution could come about, such an invasion, a gushing flow of love in the world!" It seems that the time is just right: love for Jesus in our brother, Emmaus said – "will make us live with our souls set forth towards the Ut Omnes, will make us live all the dialogues without worrying about the fact that instead of



three focolari, we'll have two, instead of four zones we'll have two. Chiara didn't have any and she started everything. Even we can do the same and we must do it because it's what Chiara asks us to do today".

A new setup for the Zones

Even when we talk about a process that is already underway in some zones, or has just been started in others, and which has changed the territorial setup of the Opera through projects of zone mergers, the ultimate goal is still the "Ut Omnes". Emmaus explained that: "This process which is being implemented to restructure the Opera – in some cases it means merging zones – seems to me to be in line with the "Ut Omnes". So don't be afraid, because it's being done not to shrink but to broaden, to widen the soul and not really to enlarge the territory. It's true that sometimes we feel constrained by circumstances, but we must not forget that even circumstances make part of those things God uses to tell us what He wants from us".

Is the Opera moving ahead or backwards? Somebody might ask himself such a question. "It's not the Opera has gone backwards – the president underlined – it has moved forward because each one of us has shouldered greater responsibility, he has felt to be more motivated, he has taken some steps to help, to collaborate, and everyone has grown, everyone has moved ahead. And since the communities felt a greater responsibility, they have also increased their range of action, they went a bit beyond their own detail. Therefore all this has been something positive".

What will happen in the zones that are undergoing the process of a new setup? "A

possible urge – Emmaus suggested – is that it serves the Kingdom of God (...) Even where a merger has already been decided, my wish, my prayer and my unity is that this year won't be a year in which the Opera is closed up in itself, that it tries to understand how to go about its internal part, but that it looks out of itself and functions in view of the Kingdom of God".

Courage, trust, new relationships

And finally a wish. Giancarlo talked about trust the zone needs to have in the 'zonette', even in a greater measure in this phase, and he broadened its perspective: "We now courageously say: zonette trust the local communities! A small appeal: even in this case I'd say: be courageous! And I'd tell the branches. It's really something precious to talk about this in front of the General Council, and I'd say in one word: don't be afraid! Don't be afraid! The internal members will not ruin their formation, which has sometimes lasted already for ten years and over, if they get involved in the local communities! Don't be afraid. Help them, help them in any way possible; you'll then find out they've grown, and this way(method) will be in accordance with what we've been saying here".

What "assignments" have been given for the current year? "Send us the experiences of how your relationships improved during the year – Emmaus said – and even in the annual report "paginetta", instead of asking you how many Mariapolis did you have or how many ... we'll ask you: "How have your relationships improved during the year?"

Aurora Nicosia



29 ottobre

Chiara Luce

Our mate in our Holy Journey

Two years after her beatification, the gen from Sassello arouses a lifestyle based on the Gospel

Five hundred fifty young people in Mannheim, Germany, 1800 in the Canton Valais, Switzerland, 3000 young and old in Teramo, Italy, 6000 in Zdar, Czech Republic. These are only some of the statistics which show how many people are getting to know Chiara Luce through meetings about her. Well, it's impossible to state precise figures: the number of people who visit the page about Chiara Lubich on Facebook cannot be quantified, or the number of sick who get to know about her life and her process for canonization, or those who visit www.chiara-luce.org and after reading a few lines are enchanted by this young Blessed of today. Besides all those who have read books, or watched musicals, artistic works and drama about her.

On the morrow of her beatification, Pope Benedict XVI had talked about Chiara Luce in Sicily during a meeting with a big number of young people and he indicated her as an example of a person who had reached fulfillment and become holy. And now, two years later, the Holy Father has inserted her as one of the 13 "intercessors" of the next WYD in Rio de Janeiro.

But what has happened in the mean time?

In Italy, Argentina, in Asia, in Australia, all the world over: it's impossible to check the flow that starts off from Sassello, her native town, and then radiates, enlivens and generates a generation which is really "new" which that it is capable of contributing towards the building of a united world.

In many municipalities, in Italy and elsewhere, administrators and citizens have dedicated parks, streets, altars in churches by putting her portrait, to Chiara Luce; some nuns have chosen her name when taking their vows and some parents have called their baby girls, sometimes born after a difficult delivery, with her name.

The experience of the gen in Sassello has brought a new spring of life: this girl who put Chiara Lubich's ideal of unity in practice to the full, now continues to fascinate and to enthral thousands and thousands of people at all latitudes – especially young people – and she keeps telling them, who are frequently



keen on having everything and immediately, that it is possible to become saints today in this world, in our society.

The new generations of the Movement have found, in her, an exceptional mate in their Holy Journey who helps

them spread the Ideal. The opportunities to do so seem to multiply and know no end and young people are on the front line in every event, for they are convinced that with Chiara Luce they can bear witness to the great opportunity of becoming saints together, starting off by living the Ideal at home, with their friends, on the streets where they live, it means no longer walking on your own, but hand in hand. Imagination knows no bounds in expressing the beauty that emerges from the message and the life of the gen and where Chiara Luce is their forerunner.

How come there are so many unexpected positive results?

Chiara Lubich gives us a reply for this question for "she urges us to become saints together". This is what's new about it. Chiara Luce made holiness become fashionable once again and she

The Chiara Luce Centre

www.chiaraluce.org

Some emails and impressions received after meetings about Chiara Luce and her experience

Daniele talks to Chiara Luce herself: «Dear Chiara, I got to know about you a short time ago, to tell you the truth it was only yesterday ... I was struck by your sincere faith which I find it hard to have ... and the fact that you listened to and accomplished the will of the Lord without going back on your word or doubting it. Give me a hand ...».

A youngster from Brazil, on his way back from Sassello: «What matters now, more than remembering Chiara Luce is living like her! And we live holiness together, even on the coach».

An e-mail from Mattia: «Sl'm a 26 year old and in a few days time I'll be in hospital for an operation in my brains due to a relapse. Last Sunday, during confession, I was advised to read: *lo ho tutto* (I have everything). I read it all at one go and I was struck by the strength Chiara Luce gave me; according to me, Chiara was, is and will be a marvelous example. Thank you, Chiara! This morning, when I finished reading the book, my sorrow was transformed in strength, in positive energy. I hope I have the chance to come and visit you in Sassello!».

The Chiara Luce Centre - info@chiaraluce.org - - functions in collaboration with the International Centre of Youth for a United World and follows the various events linked with the young lady from Sassello where the Focolare Movement is involved.



spurred the wish to spend one's life for something great, in young people and adults too; and at the top of the list there are the new generations who have received her "torch" and are now really set on giving Chiara's charism to the world.

And if it's a fact the Chiara Luce, a gen, was the first person of the Focolare Movement to reach beatification, likewise, now her person, her experience is the heritage of all the Church and all mankind: in fact many Bishops were enthralled when they discovered that this type of holiness attracts young people. Mgr. Rino Fisichella, president for the Pontifical Council for the New Evangelization, when he was in Melbourne last summer, while talking about Chiara Luce and the experience Mariateresa and Ruggero Badano related – that even he had been able to get acquainted with during a conference in Turin

- said: "an example of real evangelization present in the Church today. Chiara Luce Badano bore witness heroically of Jesus Crucified and Risen: in her we can find a true model of holiness for the Church today".

And Chiara Luce is also an answer for the suffering we find in society today. 200 detainees at Rebibbia, the Roman Prisons, were deeply moved by her experience. When Maria Teresa and Ruggero finished talking, each one of them wanted to greet them personally and in a handshake or an embrace they felt they had found new strength to go on; "Chiara taught me to face life and death; who knows whether I'll be capable to face my moment. Even what I'm going through here and now is my moment".

compiled by Tiziana Nicastro



A soul at work Foco and the fruiti of the Spirit

A new issue, compiled
by Pino Quartana and
distributed by the
Igino Giordani Centre

Lately, Pino Quartana has compiled some meditations about Igino Giordani which were offered during various meetings at the Centre of the Opera. Those who participated were led

to the peaks of the experience of Foco, completely devoted to the Opera and faithful to Chiara, and from such heights a kind of spiritual "vertigo" urged them down towards

the call to live for unity today. The

topics were chosen because of their validity today: the Word, the social aspect, virginity. These

meditations have been collected in an issue which can be obtained

by making a request to the Igino Giordani Centre. They are meditations about Foco but though Pino never directed the topic towards himself so as not to diminish space for Foco and Chiara, when you read the text it seems evident that he is not only a messenger. Especially today, when Pino's health is failing, his words echo with truth and love, showing the way of love for the Opera, for Chiara, for the co-founder: Foco.

Alberto Lo Presti



Pino Quartana with Igino Giordani

DIALOGUE IN THE MAKING

In Corea with Confucius and Buddha

Discovering the cultural roots of the
country

A visit to the Confucianism centre in Seoul. Last August, I visited Sungkyunkwan, a Confucianism Centre in Korea where I had been previously invited by Dr. Gun-Duk Choi who had represented Confucianism during the meeting at Assisi in 2011. I went there with Maris Moon e Alberto Kim (delegates for the Opera), and Corin and Joseph Jang (responsible for the inter-faith dialogue in the zone). Dr. Choi, the president, illustrated the centre which is also the oldest university which was set up in the 4th century and it is a historical landmark in Korean culture.

The term Confucianism comes from Confucius, a great Chinese thinker and philosopher, who lived 550 years before Christ. His teachings left a deep mark on the thought and life style of some countries in the Far East. It's interesting to note that it's where you can find the oldest quote of the Golden rule: a disciple had asked him

if there were a word on which one could base the behaviour of all one's life. He replied: "What you don't want done unto you do not do it to others" (Dialogues 15, 24)

To understand the Confucian roots of the culture better, which is necessary to put the





Ideal into practice there, an inter-faith and inter-cultural meeting will be held in Korea and one of the guests of the meeting will be Dr. Choi, who is really open towards Christianity.

At the Won Buddhism Centre (Iksan). We then moved to Iksan, in the South of Korea, for a visit organized by Prof. Kwang-Soo Park, director of the Institute for studies of religions at the Wonkwang University, who took part in the Symposium for Buddhists last May, in Castel Gandolfo. He was really pleased about the Symposium and the visit to Loppiano and he wanted to acquaint us with the birthplace of his religion. The University, which has 12000 students, was founded on the spirit of Won Buddhism, a modern Buddhist Movement which was born in Korea. We were received by the Grand Master Kyungsan, the 5th patriarch of the organization, who broke his period of retreat to be able to meet us. In an atmosphere of great kindness we were able to exchange our views about inter-faith dialogue. At the end the Grand Master

said: "We are companions working at the same task!"

In the afternoon a conference about "Religion and Peace" - the spirituality of the Focolare and inter-faith dialogue" was held in the hall of the university. Some lecturers and students of the



Faculty of Won Buddhism were present. After a short video about the Movement I presented the interreligious dialogue of the Focolari, which was followed by many questions and a rich and deep exchange of impressions.

The newspapers of the university and the region published the news about the meeting.

A supper to celebrate Ramadam

With our Muslim friends in Houston

Dennis and Joan Clifford, volunteers and delegates for inter-faith dialogue in Houston, invited some Muslim friends for supper during Ramadam. 8 people of the Focolare Movement and 11 Muslims were present, two Imams with their families. It was an opportunity to revive relationships.

Before supper prayers of both religions were said and then, unexpectedly the bell rang and a young Muslim lady from Samoa was at the door with a dish of food she wanted to share. She said she was pleased she had been invited and noticed the house looked different with respect to the previous year. At that point it was clear she had made a mistake and the lady was shown the house where she was supposed to go. During that same evening the lady returned with her husband to say thank you for the way she had been previously welcomed.

During supper, the conversation was mostly about the relationship between Chiara and W.D. Mohammed and the meaning of faith in our life. At the end Daa'ijah, Imam Farooq's wife, talked for a long while and she expressed her desire that people in the world lived in the same way they had experienced there that evening.