

*«A chain of commitment for peace to unite
men and women of good will».*

**The Focolare Movement unites itself in prayer and fasting for Syria
proposed by Pope Francis.**

Maria Voce shares her experience from Jordan.

«The two words that impose themselves at this extremely dramatic and dangerous moment are: total commitment to answer to Pope Francis' appeal for prayer and fasting while expressing gratitude to him for giving voice to the hearts of millions of people of all faiths from all over the world».

This is how Maria Voce expressed the feelings of the Focolare Movement from Amman, where she is meeting the Focolare communities of countries in the Middle East and North Africa. The members present form a mosaic of Churches (Catholic, Coptic Orthodox, Greek-Orthodox and Greek-Catholics, Maronites, Armenians, Chaldeans, Syrian Orthodox and Syrian Catholics) together with a good number of Muslims coming from Algeria, Morocco, Turkey and Jordan.

In his impassioned plea for peace, Pope Francis said that “it is not a culture of confrontation, a culture of conflict” that builds “harmony within and between peoples, but a **culture of encounter, a culture of dialogue: this is the only way to peace**”. And it is really touching to hear the experience that families and young people are living in Aleppo: “In spite of everything, we continue to build bridges of love and unity with others (...), to sow seeds of hope in those who suffer, to fill sad hearts with God's presence; we do our utmost to give love to others. (...) We pray for peace threatened in the world and in the Middle East, especially in Syria, Egypt, Lebanon and Iraq; and we pray for the triumph of God's love in the world”.

With all men of goodwill, members of the Focolare Movement intensify their personal commitment to spread and multiply “gestures of peace” starting with their own environments, as Pope Francis encourages us to do. In the 194 countries where the Movement is present, its members also unite in daily prayer for peace at mid-day in every time zone. Maria Voce's words summarise the intention: “To put ourselves in front of God and be at his service, so that he can make use of us as instruments of peace in all countries”.

On September 7, the Focolare members will participate in the day of prayer for peace launched by Pope Francis. They will pray for peace in Syria, in the Middle East and in the whole world joining in the various forms of prayer in parishes, in communities, on the streets and in homes, in hundreds of cities worldwide.

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