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# MARIAPOLI

Notiziario del movimento dei focolari



*Oceania*

**In the lands  
where the  
sun rises**

**Middle East**  
To build  
a world of peace

**Gen 3**  
On a journey  
to grow

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# Unity, a divine word

Unity: a divine word. If at any moment the Almighty were to pronounce this word, and people everywhere were to apply it in the most varied ways, we would see the world stop in its tracks and like a film running backwards, retake its course in the opposite direction. Countless people would reverse their tracks along the wide road to perdition and would convert to God, choosing the narrow road ... Families separated by rifts, their hearts hardened by misunderstandings and hatred, and deadened by divorce, would be recomposed.



Castel Gandolfo, 12 april 2002,  
Chiara with some gen

Children would be born into an atmosphere of human and divine love, and new people would be shaped, giving promise to a more Christian future.

Factories, often a gathering of people who are "slaves" to their work in a bored, if not vulgar atmosphere, would become places of peace, where all do their share for the good of all.

Schools would break through the limits of their short-lived knowledge, making every discipline a footstool for the contemplation of things eternal, learned in the classroom in a daily revelation of mysteries, intuited from basic formulas, simple laws, or even numbers ...

And elected bodies would be transformed into meeting places for people who battle not so much for particular interests, but for the good of all, without deceiving other colleagues or countries.

We would see a world becoming kinder, as if, in a dream, heaven came down upon the earth, and the harmonies of creation became the setting for the unity of hearts.

We would see... But it is a dream! It seems like a dream!

Yet You asked for nothing less when you prayed: «Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven» (Mt 6, 10).

*Chiara Lubich,  
Essential Writings, New York:New City Press 2007, p. 98*

# Two books, a legacy

**A year since the departure for Heaven of Giuseppe Maria Zanghì (Peppuccio) last January 23, 2015, two books have been published about him**

The volume, «Interview of Giuseppe Maria Zanghì, the cultural challenge of the charisma of unity» by Marco Martino was published for the readers of Città Nuova. The text answers to the strongly felt desire of those who were beside him for many years, to make his daily existential dimension accessible to everyone which comes to light with an often confidential tone, with unexpected reflections and intimate confessions that range from the crisis of European culture, to the present situation of the Movement, to his relationship with Chiara and his intellectual and interior journey. The interview was done by Marco Martino who, having participated in the experience of the Higher Institute of Culture and after obtaining a Degree in Political Science, continued his doctorate in research in Political Philosophy at the *La Sapienza* University in Rome and is presently a lecturer at the Sophia University Institute of Loppiano. At the conclusion of the volume, two contributions from Piero Coda and Antonio Maria Baggio review the stages of the extraordinary human and intellectual adventure of Peppuccio, highlighting the precious spiritual and cultural legacy he left us.



The second book about him is the reprinting of the volume «Reading a charisma. Chiara Lubich and culture». The text was already published in July 2013 and reprinted in December of the same year with

CNx in an initial version without particular editorial interventions. After his death, it was thought opportune to reprint it last October, in a more refined version and with graphics that make the text more accessible to the public. In particular, the numerous texts of Chiara Lubich on her experience

during the summer of 1949 - many of which were never published before - were highlighted, explicitly indicating their references, just like the comments and notes of Chiara herself.

As Peppuccio underlined in the introduction, a fundamental task for all the members of the Movement is that of: «Opening ourselves up to a reading of Paradise '49», root and summit of an intensely original mystic; to open ourselves up to a more profound understanding of the Work of Mary so as to allow the cultural novelty of the charisma of Chiara to emerge».

*Antonio Cocoluto*

# Meeting of the Middle East A project in the hands of God

The daily commitment to build a world of peace

After the retreat in the beginning of December, a meeting of the men and women focolarini of the Middle east was held in Castelgandolfo from December 8 to 10, 2015. There were 109 present (men and women focolarini living in community and the married focolarini) coming from more than 22 nations that form just one Zone, made up of 7 zonette, with 25 focolare centers plus the two new zone centers recently opened in Amman. At the meeting prepared the previous month with the contribution of all, Olga Maria Rodriguez and Dorival Spatti, concillors of the Center of the Movement for the aspect of the green and the Middle East were present, and Agnes van Zeeland and Flávio Roveré representing Centro Foco and Casa Vita also intervened in the discussions.

The idea of just one Middle Eastern-North African Zone is, in this moment, something extremely difficult to imagine and to realize: among the majority of the Countries who form



part of this, as is we know, there are rifts and in certain cases even visible or hidden armed conflicts. Precisely the fact of merging into one Zone is already a testimony, both on the civil level and also in the dialogues. Among the intern members of the Middle East this challenge is very much present and there is much love among the people and for the others, and inspite of everything the interreligious dialogue is very much alive.

Emmaus and Jesús spoke in an atmosphere of great celebration and great light: recalling what the Pope said a few days before (that in his pocket he has the rosary and the way of the cross, because the way of the cross reminds him

of the «failure of God»), Emmaus commented: *«Jesus failed: he had a project that the Father had entrusted to him, which he had to fulfill, but he didn't succeed... he reached a point wherein he could no longer take it and he cried out. [...] Therefore I think that there is nothing to say, but we can obtain this miracle of unity by doing our part. It is also true that after all this, Jesus resurrected... Maybe this revolution must emerge from the Middle East that will truly manifest*



*the power of unity, the power of the Charism».*

Jesús added: *«We can say that what the Pope said: the “failure of Jesus”– and here we could say the “failure of God”– is the failure of Christianity and the failure of Islam, precisely because we are convinced that he is the same God. I believe that to have a world of peace this should be the root, to*



*be rooted there, in the “failure of God”. And then unity among us. The unity among the Churches is urgent, now more than ever (even the Bishops said this)... And the unity with the Muslims who are making the same experience of God. To go ahead as a Movement... with a new awareness...».*

Emmaus explained: *«The radical thing is that of Jesus Forsaken and unity. And without extraordinary things, to go ahead with the Movement, Jesus in the midst in the focolares, in the communities».*

During the meeting, they also worked in many transversal groups regarding some topics, identified beforehand, that are common in the whole Zone. Some of the shared points taken from the summaries of the groups are: the encourage loving relationships that should come before the working relationship; to circulate news among the zonette, also initiatives, expertise, also of people, and to work on common projects; the zone centers are at the service of everyone, and should gather and circulate the life, to lighten the load so as to encourage «going out», to communicate the life to the Center, to be facilitators of relationships and reciprocity.

Concrete proposals: *blog*, collaboration among the colours of the zonette, involving

the intern members and the local communities, *newsletter*, etc...

There is a new awareness that «going out» needs a change of mentality: to step outside the box, to make the first step, to collaborate with other associations: «To go out together» leaving behind even the programs of one's own branch



if needed. To inculturate oneself more on the local level.

Some impressions after the meeting:

«That is my God, He is in this humanity that we call Jesus Forsaken. [...] I find happiness in this God and I feel that God has called me for this, therefore in front of all the things that are not right I will say: very good! I am called to be here, and not to be somewhere else, and so this is a new light for me».

«I saw a truly great family. This is what will remain in me. I leave with this great family where we love one another, the Zone, the big Zone. I saw a family that is fulfilled... Everyone is waiting for us, especially in this Zone... I saw the disunity among the Churches, the disunity in everything, and everyone is waiting for the focolare».

«I bring away with me that extraordinary writing of Chiara (cfr *“Risurrezione di Roma”* The Resurrection of Rome) Jesus looked at the world the way it was and he did not doubt. It is a page that we have memorized but it was imprinted in my heart as never before ... and I don't want to doubt that there is this hope that we can bring together ».

*Arlette Samman, Philippe Ehrenzeller*

With the community of Dubai



## Where living is a challenge

The trip of Emmaus and Jesús in India began with a stopover in Dubai, where the Focolare community is made up of persons coming from all over the world.

«A Dubai siamo di diverse realtà e Paesi. Il Focolare qui dipende da ciascuno di noi, siamo noi il Movimento dei Focolari qui e tutti siamo responsabili insieme. Oggi inizia una nuova tappa». L'impressione di una interna originaria dell'Asia, esprime bene la realtà che Emmaus e Jesús hanno trovato a Dubai il 15 gennaio. Avevano infatti deciso di approfittare del loro passaggio lì durante il loro viaggio verso l'India, per incontrare l'originale comunità che vive negli Emirati Arabi. Qui, nei grattacieli delle città cresciute con una velocità incredibile dai proventi del petrolio, piccoli gruppi di persone vivono l'Ideale di Chiara, alimentando l'unità fra loro anche attraverso i *social media* e incontrandosi intorno alla Parola di vita.

Erano un'ottantina, provenienti da Filippine, India, Pakistan, Egitto, Siria, Giordania, Libano, Palestina e anche Brasile e Italia, ma attualmente residenti a Dubai, Abu Dhabi, Qatar, Oman e Bahrein. Uno spaccato della popolazione di questa zona, composta al 90% da stranieri venuti a viverci per motivi di lavoro. La vita qui è una sfida: in un ambiente dove ciò che conta è il guadagno, lontani dal



proprio Paese e dalla propria cultura, è forte il rischio di lasciarsi dominare da una mentalità che mette al primo posto consumismo, interessi, comodità.

«Ringrazio tutti voi per oggi, perché ho vissuto cose molto forti, ho incontrato gente genuina e impegnata nella famiglia del focolare» diceva qualcuno dei presenti. «È la prima volta che partecipo e sono venuta qui con tanta sete – diceva un'altra - Vivere a Dubai è molto difficile: trovare sistemazione, lavoro, fare una vita autentica. Oggi c'è stata una manifestazione di ciò che stavo cercando. Ho sentito una forte presenza di Dio, l'amore di tutti a prescindere



dalla situazione che ciascuno vive. Grazie per questa opportunità, ci rivedremo presto».

Bellissima la preparazione di questo atteso momento: «Abbiamo fatto l'esperienza che non conta un'idea o l'altra, ma costruire la famiglia dove Gesù in mezzo fa venir fuori il meglio di tutti». «Chiara ha detto: *"meglio il meno perfetto in unità che il più perfetto in disunità..."* – conferma qualcun altro –. Così oggi quello che è venuto fuori è il frutto di questa unità».

Per alcuni era ritrovare «la famiglia», dopo anni in cui, per motivi diversi, si erano persi i contatti. «Ho incontrato il Movimento da gen4 – dice una giovane africana – Quando sono venuta a Dubai non sapevo che era presente anche qui. Mio marito e i miei figli non sono con me. Sono davvero felice. Attraverso le parole di Emmaus ho ricevuto una risposta da Dio».

Un interno del Medio Oriente: «Spesso capita che il giorno prima dell'incontro della Parola di vita si presentino tanti problemi e sembra impossibile potervi partecipare. Quando arrivo all'incontro porto con me le difficoltà che ho vissuto, ma subito dopo, grazie all'unità, mi sento un'altra persona». Ed è una ricchezza conoscersi e amarsi: «Prima di venire a Dubai non conoscevo niente del Pakistan e non sapevo che c'erano cristiani lì. Incontrando qui questo popolo scopro la bellezza loro e del loro Paese. Ho vissuto un momento indimenticabile durante una cena tipica pakistana».

Un giovane dell'Asia: «È stata una grande grazia conoscere il focolare nel '94. Qui a Dubai ognuno vive nella propria realtà di lavoro. Mi tengo collegato attraverso *WhatsApp* e la pagina *facebook* degli Emirati e le notizie mi aiutano a ricordare la vita dell'Ideale durante il mio intenso programma di vita e di lavoro. I contatti con il Movimento sono per me come benzina che mi ricarica e mi aiuta a vivere le difficoltà amando Gesù Abbandonato. L'incontro con Emmaus, Jesús e i focolarini, avvenuto providenzialmente durante il mio giorno libero, è stato una grandissima gioia per me».

Un gen del Medio Oriente: «Mi ha colpito ciò che ha detto Jesús a proposito del deserto che contiene i semi: io mi sentivo come uno di questi semi, come tanti di noi qui. L'arrivo dell'acqua, come oggi, ha fatto apparire i fiori. Sono ad Abu Dhabi e ci sono altri fiori accanto a me. Mi è piaciuto quello che Emmaus ha detto: *"Noi non staremo qui per sempre, ma qualunque cosa facciamo ora continuerà attraverso coloro che verranno dopo di noi perché la comunità continua"*».

Una persona della prima comunità di Dubai: «Perché sono così felice oggi? Perché sento che il piano di Dio si sta "attualizzando" in questa parte del mondo. Dobbiamo condividere questa vita, essere aperti gli uni agli altri e portare a tanti la nostra esperienza affinché si realizzi il piano di Dio qui, facendo nascere anche altre comunità in altri posti».

*Arlette Samman, Philippe Ehrenzeller*



Su Mariapoli online  
[www.focolare.org/notiziariomariapoli](http://www.focolare.org/notiziariomariapoli)  
le varie tappe del viaggio in India

# From Oceania

## In the land where the sun rises

**A trip to Oceania with the councillors of the Big Zone, Andrew Camilleri and Vania Cheng, from December 23, 2015 to January 18, 2016 who visited Wellington in New Zealand, Perth and Melbourne in Australia**

### **Breath-taking scenery and a thirst for communion in New Zealand**

It started here, a Country of extraordinary natural beauty, 2,000 kilometers east of Australia, with a population of 4,5 million inhabitants, of a predominantly European culture, but wherein the minorities (15% Maori, 7% from the Pacific islands and 12% Asian) are well integrated.

In a society wherein individualism and secularization is on the rise, there is still a profound thirst for community life. The people of the Movement are not afraid to make the extra effort so as to be able to draw from the source of unity - the focolare - and so the moments of encounter were very many.

The house of the former men's focolare of Wellington (which has been suspended at the moment) was a strong point of attraction for four days: some focolarini and gen2 spent a few days there, open to the challenge of striving to imitate Jesus, by living the generous giving of oneself to the other and towards all. The focolare became like the hive in which Jesus in the midst attracted a continuous stream of hearts. In the meantime the focolarine transferred to Hawke Bay, the place

where the sun first rises everyday. And there too the same thing happened.

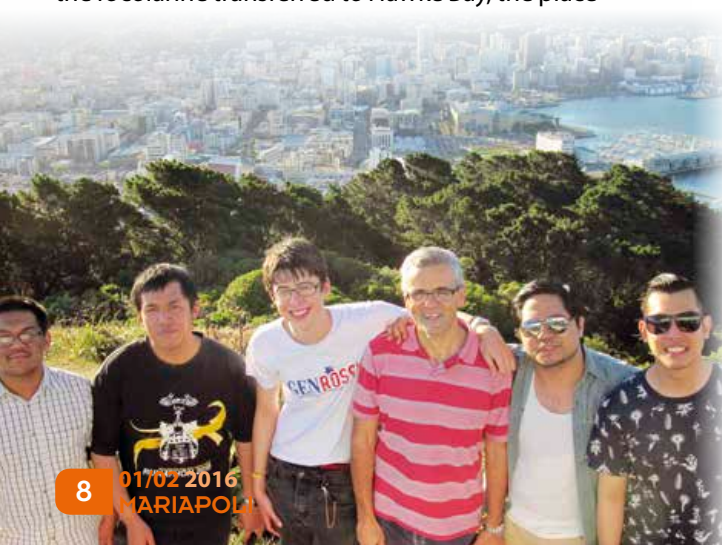
It was surprising to see the love of the community. The families brought food and supplies, many young boys and girls continued to arrive from unexpected places in order to unite themselves to this experience, even for just a few days or even for only a couple of hours.

While waiting for the reopening of the men's focolare, the gen2 boys discussed some topics that are relevant to the youth highlighting the great resource that the focolare could be to solve the problems that New Zealand is facing: the need for openness and universality, the need to give meaning to life, to love, to suffering.

### **Stop-over in Perth**

Perth is a young city where the majority of the population is made up of new immigrants. The city is vast, well-planned and auto-sufficient, but the people experience solitude, the lack of depth in the interpersonal relationships, lack of the desire to open oneself up to other cultures. One can also feel here a great thirst for moments of communion, a desire which is often expressed in evenings spent together, usually around a barbecue. The young people can't wait to travel westward to get to know the world.

During the days spent in Perth every evening was an occasion to meet various groups of the community, which enjoy a great interbnationality. Our first meeting was with the Chinese speaking community made up of people of the Movement from Hong Kong







being cared for by a couple, Lucy and Michael.

The relationship among the adults and the youth is spontaneous, simple and natural. In order to make it grow and to involve those new arrivals, the focolare suggested a «culture of visit».

The focolare centers were opened in the beginning of the '80s. But the beginning of the Movement in this city goes back to 1973. Throughout the years there were many visits from The Center, also made by the first focolarini and focolarine.

The «little flock» of the Movement today gives the impression of a living oasis in the desert that is able to quench the thirst of many. This is what Karen, a married focolarina shared: «The light received has inspired me to welcome the renewed vision of the Movement today and I will try in my own small way to understand what this means for us here in Perth».

## **The Mariapolis to build the unity of Oceania together: all on a journey to Phillip Island**

The Mariapolis for the whole Oceania was held on January 13 to 17 in Phillip Island, two hours southeast of Melbourne: a much-awaited appointment after the historic visit of Emmaus in Australia and New Zealand in 2013.

The «journey» towards this moment began more than two years ago, starting from a fund-raising activity in some islands of the south Pacific where French is spoken, up to the preparations done in the city and in the towns spread throughout the vast Australian continent.

For many, just to reach the venue of the Mariapolis meant an enormous physical and financial effort. The participants had to face unimaginable trips, covering incredible distances!

In the extremely far islands of Oceania, trusting in the providence of God, the communion of goods and the experience of «Give and you will receive» more people than was foreseen were able to make the trip to go to the Mariapolis. The families of the islands of Wallis and Futuna were able to collect the necessary amount to pay for their accommodations in the Mariapolis, and even for the trip of 4,470 kms from Futuna and almost



4,700 kms. from Fiji! A participant from the islands of Kiribati arrived after a trip that included taking several planes and making several stop-overs, which took up to five days.

The mariapolis was a spectacle of universality with more than 50 nationalities, people from some Asian, African, American and European countries. Many said that after the experience made during those days they can affirm with certainty that it is possible to live for a united world.

*Prepared by the editorial board*



Messico



Costa d'Avorio

## Focolarine and focolarini

# Bringers of joy

**This year there were many annual meetings of the focolarine and the focolarini in various Countries. In this issue we will focus on those held at Castel Gandolfo, which were followed by live streaming in many parts of the world**

Just like every year, more than 7,000 focolarine and focolarini of the world spent a few days for their Annual Spiritual Rerthead, a precious occasion of unity with God and with the neighbor. There were many meetings, in all the latitudes, with big and small groups and with a great variety in the programmes.

In December two of these, with a beautiful presence from all the continents, were held in Castel Gandolfo, followed by a third in January for Eastern and Western Europe. There was a total participation of around 2,800 focolarine and focolarini living in community and the married ones.

Among the many others we received news from those held in Austria for Central Europe, in the Ivory Coast, in three places in Brazil, in Loppiano, in the Hispano-American 2 Zone, in various parts of Italy and, the last in mid-January in Mexico, with the presence of Agnes van Zeeland and Flávio Roveré and others from the Centers if the Sections.

It is difficult to sumamrise in a few words the experience lived... In general it seems to us that it was a new step forward in the life of the Ideal because, after having deepened and lived more the union with God in

the preceeding year, this time we were able to look at our realtionships, at dialogue, at unity with everyone: with every brother and sister that we meet, in our focolares, between among the focolarini and focolarine...

The preparation was an experience that was shared and planned by our two Centers, with the Zones, with the focolarine and focolarini of various Churches, in a journey of reciprocal listening and sharing that made us experience a tangible unity from the very first day of the meeting.

The theme of Emmaus on unity was the golden thread that guided the programme of the different days, which we had dedicated to the various expressions that she had underlined: *gift, committment, goal*.

During the first day in particular, the focus was on the human-divine dimension of our vocation, and we rediscovered the greatness of having been created by God as a gift for one another and that in this light it is possible to give life to a true dialogue. The gratuitousness of the love of God that has made us this way and which has given us the Charism of unity filled everyone with great joy and a new hope.



On the second day, the *commitment* was concretized in the challenge of how to realize a greater dialogue and unity with everyone and especially in our focolares, in the light of the highest model that Chiara has always indicated to us in the life of the Trinity.

A living remembrance of Fr. Pasquale Foresi (Chiaretto), prepared by his focolare, and the presentation of the thoughts of Foco on dialogue offered by the Iginio Giordani Center, opened the third day wherein with the focolarine and focolarini of various Churches we reviewed together the journey made in these years, through the sharing of the challenges, sorrows, joys, that have allowed us to enter more profoundly in the ecumenical reality lived within the Movement.

The dialogues with Emmaus and Jesùs, which were followed - like most of the programme - through live streaming in many part of the world, were moments of real family and of much light.

A video recording of Vera Araújo and the interventions of Renata Simon and Francisco Canzani (councillors at the Center for the aspect of «Wisdom and studies») brought to us the reality of «Paradise '49».

A unique characteristic of these meetings was that of looking at our life as focolarine and focolarini, entering concretely into our relationships, with experiences, reflections, communion... to help us to live our vocation with more radicalness, projected towards «*That all may be one*».

A reason for great joy and hope was the announcement of the opening of new focolares: in Zambia, in Belarus and in Ethiopia (women's centers); in Tanzania, in Myanmar, in Baar, Switzerland, in Nazareth in the Holy Land, in India in the Bengals (men's centers), and also the sprint and the purity of the Ideal in the focolarine and in the focolarini who, having finished the school of formation of Loppiano and Montet, were leaving for the Zones.

Looking at this planetary experience and at the echoes which arrived, it seems that we can say that we didn't speak so much of dialogue and unity but rather we experienced them. An experience that «miracles» of reconversion, reconciliation, new faith and hope in unity. The words at the end of each day bore witness to this: gratitude, joy, mercy, unity, tenderness, gift...

«We lived a real day of focolare!» many said. And also: «In the free, full and profound communion, the presence of Jesus among us was strong and visible»; «I want to take care of the others even in the smallest gestures, up to arriving at the sanctification of the focolare», «In the dialogue with Emmaus and Jesús we saw our being focolarini today».

To sum up everything in just one word, it could be «*joy*», as Emmaus underlined at the end of the last retreat, wishing for us that we may experience with our life how unity «*brings the joy, that we have experienced many times, but which becomes always more real so that the world will believe*».

*The centers of the focolarine and the focolarini*



# «To look with the eyes of God»

Excerpts of the answers of Emmaus Voce and Jesús Morán  
at the retreats of the women and men focolarini at Castel Gandolfo

## How can we reach unity of mind and how is this lived at the Center of the Movement

«At the beginning of this new six-year mandate, when there was the Assembly, and I found myself with Jesús as Copresident and with the other focolarini and focolarine elected by the Assembly for the Center of the Movement, I logically didn't know everyone, and I also didn't know the talents, the virtues, the limitations of one or the other. I only knew one thing: that they were elected by the Assembly. I knew, therefore, that God has chosen them just as He has chosen me [...] and he has put us together for a plan of his, with his design, with his vision [...]. Meeting them with this attitude it is clear that I wasn't looking to see if he or she was from eastern Europe or western Europe, if he or she was older or younger, if they were competent in that sector or in another sector. I looked at each one: he or she is a gift from God, and as such I approached each one, and as such I totally trusted him or her.

I believe that all of us made this step, and having done so it was easy to reach then



the unity of mind, but which has never been uniformity, rather: the more the unity grew among us, the more we discovered the specific talents of one or the other, the qualities of one or the other, and therefore we thanked God all the more for having put us beside that focolarino who really knew about that certain thing, who entered completely into that problem and came up with solutions that maybe we would not have found, because he or she had the expertise in that area [...]

The unity of mind therefore does not mean that we have to all think or do the same thing, or that we must all move in the same way, that we must all use the same expressions, the same images, no! It is precisely this unity that is reciprocal love.

And so how do we achieve it? We reach it by starting from trust: that person I will meet is someone that God has planned for me to meet, he or she is a gift of God for me, and so I welcome him, I open myself to her, I give her all of myself; I give my thoughts, my opinion, I listen, everything that I have because I



trust her, because it is Jesus who sent her to me. I place myself in this disposition, and so I give everything, but giving is an act of love, it is not giving just to arrive at the unity of mind, no! We love one another, simply this, and the unity of mind comes as a consequence».

## The new set-up and the identity of the focolarino

Emmaus: «This morning when I heard Chiara speak of the moment of the Pact of unity with Chiaretto, at a certain point I noticed that she said: *“The earth became my Heaven”*. [...] This is the identity of the focolarino: to be on earth, but to make of the earth Heaven. So it is not that must detach ourselves from the earth, it is not that we have to forget about humanity, it is not that we must ignore the things happening around us, but we must look at all these things



with the eyes of God, which means with the eyes of Jesus in the midst, because for us God makes himself manifest in Jesus in the midst, that which is made manifest in unity. [...] If we do this I think that we will make the others happy, which means that we will be doing that for which God has called us».

Jesús: «We see this enthusiasm in the Movement, in the focolarini and in the focolarine, which is also linked to the new set-up, a new push to live our vocation; in spite of this there are also some suspensions, some confusion - this

is logical - on our role because there is a radical change, a considerable turning point also from the structural point of view and the dynamics in the Zones.

Something which comes to mind is this: I believe that in these times there could be a double temptation for us, because they have the same root. [...]. One is that there could be a resistance to the “new”, to the “new” of the Spirit, precisely because it disorients us, it takes away all certainties. But there could also be the obsession for the “new”. I think that it is a temptation which has the same root, which is the lack of Holy Spirit - and this is something that we all experience - because the Holy Spirit is novelty, constant novelty, permanent updating. Therefore resisting the “new” means that the Holy Spirit is lacking. But this obsession for novelty is also a lack of the Holy Spirit which makes us lose sight of the fact that the Holy Spirit does not come from himself but proceeds from the Father and from the Son, he is rooted. Therefore it is not “new” for newness’s sake: (this) is also a lack of the Holy Spirit. We must be careful».

Emmaus: «I believe that the Holy Spirit asks us sometimes to also be patient, to give time to time, which means to wait for things to mature, because what is important is that everything that we do - the turning point, the new set-up - is done in love, out of love. If one feels that he or she is too tense, certainly he will not feel the love of God which allows one to mature gradually. There are the younger ones who want to do everything that was planned quickly, and the others who are a bit more tired and who are a bit afraid of this. We need understanding on both sides. We must be mindful of acting according to the Holy Spirit, and the Holy Spirit is Love, therefore we cannot hurry, but we cannot also slow down, we must love. This is our identity! ».

*prepared by the editorial board*

# Focolarini priests

# Identity and prophecy

**Rooted in the design of the Work of Mary**

We begin from the end: at the conclusion of the meeting of the focolarini priests, held from December 21 to 24, 2015 at Nemi, in the Castelli Romani (Italy), and we could say: «We came in order to understand better our identity as focolarini priests, but to our surprise what we rediscovered and deepened was our identity as “popi”<sup>1</sup>, as focolarini, and as a consequence we entered all the more into that extraordinary design of the Work of Mary.

Emmaus opened this meeting in quite a special way. wherein almost all of the 63 focolarini priests in the world were able to come, because it has been many years since a meeting such as this was held. But as Emmaus recalled, during Chiara Lubich’s time «it was normal that once in awhile she would call the focolarini priests to talk with them about the “Marian” priesthood».

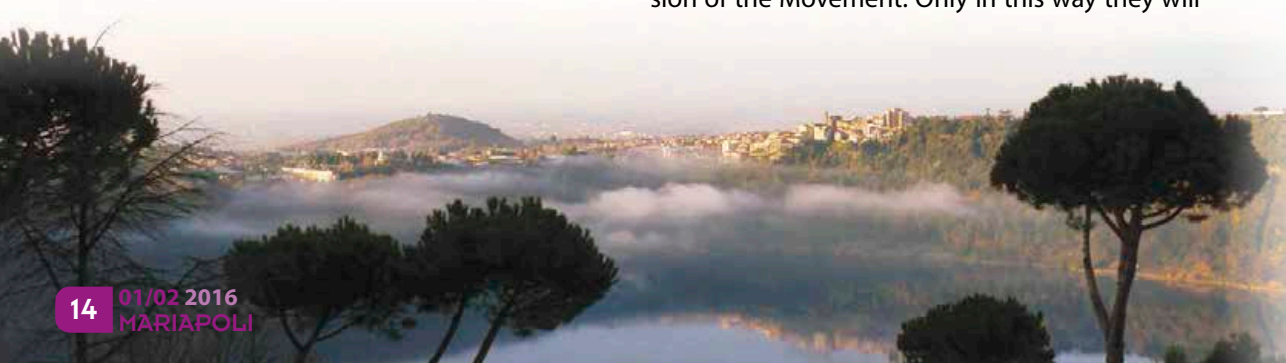
It was the texts born or shared by Chiara in these occasions that served as the setting of this meeting, with the presence of all the members of the Center of the focolarini and the members of the mixed commission which in these past years has tried to study in depth this priesthood that *«is still a bit mysterious»* - as Emmaus had defined it. From various interventions of Chiara what came to light is the profound radicalness

of the priesthood of the focolarini or better, the «priestly character» of the men’s section, in the history and the experience of the Movement: its being a gift of Mary, its pure orientation towards Jesus Forsaken, its total insertion in the life of the focolare and of the Movement.

A focolarina and a Bishop were given the task of studying this vision in depth. Florence Gillet presented the spirituality of Chiara in the perspective of the royal priesthood, common to all the baptized. The Ideal, as presented in her central point of her theme, invites us all to be fully Jesus and thus to become mediators, which means priest for the world.

Mons. Giuseppe Petrocchi, archbishop of Aquila (Italy), presented a theology of the priesthood according to and after the Second Vatican Council. What emerged was an extraordinary theme on the ecclesiology of the Work of Mary, in its being fully Church. He encouraged everyone to love our Charism with radicalness, and to be totally that which we must be in order to realize in this way, our being Church. The focolarine and the focolarini are Church – the Bishop said – inasmuch as they are totally daughters and sons of Chiara, to whom a charism in the Church was given. Consequently also the focolarini priests realize their being priests by being fully focolarini, well inserted in their focolare and a total expression of the Movement. Only in this way they will

1 Term in the Trentine dialect which means: children





In 2016 the following five focolarini will be ordained to the priesthood: Roberto Almada of the Center of the focolarini, Chun Boc Tay of Thailand, Claudio Battistutti of Rome, Froi Fajardo of Tagaytay and Mario Arakaki of Lima

be able to give to the Church the gift of a new priesthood: the Marian priesthood.

On this basis – an almost prophetic one – it was natural to talk about the juridical aspects, especially that which concerns the open-ended question of the incardination of the focolarini priests. Since a priest can act only with a juridical link to an ecclesiastical authority, and the Movement being a private association, does not have this authority, the focolarini priests are linked to the Diocese of the Bishop who ordained them. Chiara herself dreamed of an incardination of the focolarini priests in the Work of Mary. We made an attempt several years ago but it was not successful. Now we are studying - with the help of Mons. Christoph Hegge, canon lawyer and Auxiliary Bishop of Münster (Germany) and of Fr. Silvestre Marques, also a canon lawyer – a new formula in order to achieve this goal, without creating an association for them and without changing the general Statutes of the Movement. The first results of the work being done were welcomed with great consensus by the focolarini priests. There is hope that we will be able to explain well to the Church the prophetic vision of this particular priesthood.

Under the guidance of the copresident Jesús Morán and of the Central delegate of the

focolarini, Flávio Roveré, the gathering was also a working meeting. In various moments they worked in groups on certain topics for example:

- the permanent formation of the focolarini priests;
- the role of the focolarini priests in the spiritual accompaniment of the members of the Movement;
- the action of the focolarini priests in the name of and as an expression of the whole Movement;
- the communication of the figure of the focolarino priest within the Movement.

Definitely what came to light was that these priests are first of all «focolarini», which means that the exercise of their ministry does not condition or limit their being «popi», sons of Chiara. *«We must not be worried about what*



*to do as priests or on how we must do it - Jesús Morán said. We must only be concerned about being true focolarini and to verify this always in the life of unity».*

Emmaus, who returned for the conclusion of the gathering, was totally happy of the results. *«You have done beautiful things»* she underlined. She then expressed a kind of prophecy, starting from the liturgical readings of the day wherein God told David: *«I will set a place for Israel, my people, and I will plant you there so that you may dwell there and tremble no more»*; as if God was making a promise to resolve even the question of incardination.

Joachim Schwind



Priests and deacons focolarini

# Undisputed champions of unity

**In four hundred they held their annual retreat in Castel Gandolfo in an atmosphere of great joy from January 12 to 15**

The priests and deacons of Central Europe were not present because they will meet at the beginning of February in Vienna. In fact, there is the desire for alternate meetings: one year all together and the next year in the Zones. This year at Castel Gandolfo those who were present came from Italy, western and eastern Europe and some from the continents outside Europe.

The theme, as we all know, is unity, and the title given to the retreat was: «Unity: our Charism». From the impressions gathered we can say that these days were from: «A returning with Chiara to the heart of Paradise» to: «We reached the top of Tabor with Emmaus, but with Chiara we came down to embrace Jesus Forsaken who was revealed to us again».

The first lines of the second part of the theme on unity of Chiara given in 1981, raised the spiritual atmosphere immediately: «The video offers the chance to be reborn in the fullness of joy of which Chiara speaks, when we live unity; a reality that must never be taken for granted, because it requires the death of ourselves; I can feel the grace to be able to make this step once more during this retreat»; «*Unity and nothing else*» is a reality to remember constantly because otherwise the pastoral activities will have the upper

hand»; «*Unity is Jesus*», an affirmation that makes us grasp the importance of the Incarnation».

Meditations on the Ideal of unity in the morning and in the afternoon a «window on the Movement» so as to grasp the beauty of «going out», «suitably prepared» with the Ideal of unity that is a «Gift», «Commitment», «Goal» (as Emmaus said). One of the goals are the five dialogues. The priests felt that they had to commit themselves more for the dialogues.

Mons. Petrocchi, archbishop of Aquila, masterfully presented Mary as a model for our priesthood. The focus on the relationship between unity and the means of communication was interesting with the presentation of the two Councillors at the Center Cecilia Capuzzi and Paolo Loriga, and of some of the committed communicators in the field of our *media*: communication yes, but in view of making everyone «one body». Vera Araújo made evident the «new theological anthropology» underlying the writings of «Paradise '49». Jesús Morán indicated a pathway to bring up to date the vocation of the priest focolarino, as the zipper between the Church and the Movement.

At the end of the Congress someone said: «We priest focolarini must be the “undisputed champions” when it comes to unity».

*prepared by the center of the priest focolarini*



# Gens

## The fullness of joy that comes from unity

**International meeting of seminarians. At the center of the meeting is the theme on unity and the fruits that it brings**

Africa, Latin America and Europe: these were the continents represented by fifty five seminarians who came to Castel Gandolfo for our annual retreat. With the motto «*That all may be one*» (Jn 17,21), we aimed straight at unity. From the start an atmosphere of family was created, reinforced by the fact that the congress was held simultaneously with that of the gen3 girls with whom we shared some moments in common.

Three words, taken from the theme on unity of Emmaus, accompanied all the reflections: *gift, commitment, goal*. It was very important to reflect on how unity is a *gift*, because it is given by God and expressed through a Charism given to Chiara Lubich, who strived to bring this to humanity from the very beginning.

But this – we told ourselves – asks for a *commitment* from each one of us. And here is what we can do: to live reciprocal love among us, following the commandment of Jesus: «*Love one another as I have loved you*». (Jn 15,12). Finally, our eyes have to turn towards the fruit of this love, which is the *goal*, that must bring us to that unity desired by Jesus, which is «*Ut omnes unum sint*» (*That all may be one*).

The intervention of Jesús Morán made us grasp the many precious pearls for our everyday

life. «*Unity is a desire of man – Jesús said – which means, that we are made for unity, we have been created for love and we come from love so as to be a gift one for the other*». And then «*Everyone is a candidate to unity, therefore we must create a culture of unity wherever we are [...] The foundation of unity is Jesus [...] if you bring unity within you, you create reciprocity*». This was followed by an exchange of profound experiences between Jesús and the seminarians in a fraternal and sincere atmosphere.

Many things remained in the hearts of everyone. Someone was touched by the effort made by everyone to build unity, even if they came from different countries; another said: «I must allow myself to fall in love with Jesus, letting go of all things that are not Him» and another underlined: «In front of the beautiful experiences shared, I felt called by concrete love. I want to live this way too, giving myself to all the people».

It was important for everyone to understand that the fruit of unity is the fullness of joy. We went home with the desire to bring Jesus, the source of unity, to the world that has so much need of this joy that comes from the encounter with Him in the neighbour.

Fr. Zbyszek Wolkowicz



# A travelling Gen3 School

On a journey to grow, to meet, to go and bring unity



*Castel Gandolfo, Rome, Assisi, Loppiano Trent: the principal stop-overs of the gen3 school, which ended last January 13. There were 79 gen3 girls who participated from Malaysia, Korea, Uruguay Paraguay, Brazil, Argentina and South Africa.*

**Starting date, December 26.** This is just the official date, because the trip going to the venue was more than adventurous for many, with hours spent at the airport even on Christmas Eve - and the many activities done to finance the trip, so the gen3 school had already begun long before.

«Preparations and difficulties encountered were integrated into what we learned during the school. If I could, I would write a book about these days! But since I can't, I asked myself: what does Jesus want to tell me? In time I will discover this always more, but what I feel now, after my marriage with Jesus Forsaken, is that I must give proof of this love that Jesus is giving me and which is so great and to bring it to the world, embracing Him in the difficult moments» (Paula)

Preparing oneself for the school was not just fund-raising, obtaining permission from parents and teachers: «Upon hearing about the school, it seemed to me that I felt a special call from God. This is the Ideal that I want with all my heart» - Emily wrote.

**Before we reached Castel Gandolfo,** we went to visit Chiara in the chapel and in her house, meeting her also through her things, her usual routine, through the stories of those who had lived with her. Impressions which were renewed in Trent.

«To know more about Chiara, to see her as a gen just like us, who fights for the same ideas, for her Ideal has inspired us to be like her, to be able all together to be the generation of saints!» (Clara)



Passing in front of the house of the first focolarini, why don't we ring the doorbell? Said and done! Marco Tecilla welcomed us with joy and, after having shared something of his life with us, he asked: «And has anyone of you felt the call to follow Jesus?». Four of us raised our hand confiding to him our fears. Marco told us that our first vocation is to love. It is enough to continue to love, because in this way God can manifest Himself fully.



**On December 30 we were in St. Peter's Square.** The Pope greeted us encouraging us «to be messengers of solidarity among the nations and witnesses of joy and of hope».

**In Loppiano we focused on our being persons, created by God with talents still to be discovered** and made fruitful. With the help of some professionals in the fields of music, social commitment, theatre, recitation, dance and journalism, we drew out some of our talents and we practiced them, seeing how these can be the gift that God gave us to be able to love those beside us, to bring unity in our cities and in the entire world.

The strongest moment of the school was the day dedicated to Jesus Forsaken. Some



**And finally, in Trent, welcomed in the very beautiful Chiara Lubich Mariapolis Center.** Jesus in our midst continued to grow, also through the instruments of our life of unity. Maria Gloria explained: «The language and the different cultures were not an obstacle: I felt that the gen3 from the farthest places were my sisters! We made the moment of truth and it pointed us on the road to sanctity. I want to “work” to improve the points that the gen3 indicated to me, because I felt that it was an act of love made by them for me».

Luciana thus summarized these days: «The school was a new encounter between me and Jesus, a moment to discover who I am and the reason why I am here. It is something incredible that will not end once we go home, rather it is only the beginning. Now I have the absolute certainty that I want a better work with more unity and peace».



«The school has helped me to solve my worries and all that was difficult for me to understand in my daily life. The Ideale of unity has grown within me and now I can welcome Jesus Forsaken totally. Before I didn't know how to love Him» (Ginetta)

have had their special encounter with Jesus Forsaken. Khanyi sharing about losing her mother said: «I saw many painful situations with a new light, that of Jesus Forsaken. I feel a new relationship with God and a new joy».

The sharing of experiences was an occasion for spiritual and human growth, as Luisina confirmed: «I gave up my 15th birthday celebration to come here and I could not have made a better choice! I go back happy! Now I can confirm that this is the life that I want to live. I liked very much the “marriage” with Jesus Forsaken, each time there is the cross, I renew my commitment with Jesus».



«There is one phrase I will carry in my heart, it will be my motto: “love conquers all”. It summarizes everything that we have experienced and it gives me the faith to entrust everything to Jesus. I will continue to build unity in my city the way Chiara did» (Maria Angelica)

«What made this a unique experience – Daniela said – were not the places even if they were very beautiful, but above all it was the gen3, the focolarine, the people who spoke to us... For the first time I saw many different cultures gathered together! I thank God and all those who made this school possible».

Prepared by Sara Felli

Marco Tecilla: «I feel like an old tree trunk surrounded by very beautiful flowers»



## Gen3 in Nigeria A contest won by everyone

**The attacks of the fundamentalist group Boko Haram, the violence, the attentati: da alcuni anni la Nigeria vive realtà difficili, fatte di tensioni e conflitti. Ferite aperte in tutta la società che anche i ragazzi vivono in prima persona**

*Recentemente in Nigeria the gen3 boys had their congress. Among the messages that came was the one from Emmaus who, through sms, assured her presence and her encouragement. Also present at the congress was Agostino Spolti, the worldwide responsible of the gen3 Movement and the Teens for unity.*

«We are on our way, and our car full of mattresses, made a stop-over to welcome some gen3. Then we drove to Igbarian, a village that is 40 kilometers from the city of Onitsha, in the south-eastern part of the Country, where the Focolare community is present. There, all the gen3 boys of Nigeria had agreed to meet. We travelled along the dirt road, where the rain had left behind big chunks of earth that made the trip quite bumpy.

**As soon as they arrived, the gen3 boys divided themselves into small groups** called “gen units” where each one gave their own contribution. Some prepared breakfast, lunch or dinner, waking up at 5:30 and, after the 6:00 Mass, they gathered firewood, lit the fire, filled the cooking pots with water ...

Sports was not lacking with football games and ping-pong tournaments. The race to make acts of love involved everyone, the small gestures highlighted the care and attention given to one another.

**“We feel that we are the first ones responsible for what we all greatly desire:** to live as real gen3” confided one of them. Sisto and Jean Bosco, two gen2 boys are their guardian angels.

They went deeper into the gen3 life through dialogue, questions, listening. A panorama on the activities of the gen3 all over the world with many experiences revealed the true “football field” of daily life where one had to make goals. **“I can’t describe – a gen3 shared –** the joy of that evening when, I went to bed tired but happy after I forgave my classmate. From that day onwards, every morning, he waits for me so that we could walk to school together”. Another 14 year old gen3 is living with his aunt because his parents are separated. In time his life was transformed and he was able to invite his mother to spend a day at the congress.

**The gen3 girls were also present on the last day.** We prepared together for the programme of the year: to live the Works of Mercy. We celebrated five gen3 who are moving up to gen2. We thank God for all that we have experienced and lived. For me it is a further and beautiful confirmation of how much the teens want to experience true relationships and to enjoy beautiful things».

*Agostino Spolti*

# Gen2 Formation

## Little Towns, potential of life

**The first meeting-laboratory for those responsible of the gen2 Schools in the world**

There are 12 Little Towns in the world that have a gen2 School: Mariapolis Renata (Italy), Mariapolis Lia (Argentina), Mariapolis Ginetta and Mariapolis Gloria (Brazil), Mariapolis Luminosa (United States), Mariapolis of Fontem (Cameroun), Mariapolis Piero (Kenya), Mariapolis Peace (Philippines), Mariapolis *El Diamante* (Mexico), Mariapolis Foco (Switzerland), Mariapolis *Nuova Legge* (Germany) and the Mariapolis Center of Colombia. This year, for



formative programme that could be applied more concretely according to the various contexts in which we are living together with the new generations. The common basis is the passion of being able to accompany the gen2 boys and girls in an experience of life that could be a mirror of the Trinitarian dynamics in order to be that global person (world-man) that humanity is waiting for. We were particularly happy to see the harmony of the work done with what Chiara had given as the path to follow when the first gen school was born. It seemed to us that we can see Chiara once again working in the Movement today.

the first time, an appointment was set with all those responsible for these twelve schools in December at the Mariapolis Center of Castel Gandolfo. Ours was also a «school» of life with Jesus the Teacher who guided our work with much communion and reciprocal enrichment. What a potential of life in the various Little Towns! We found ourselves in the «heaven» of the other, so much so that we could say «what is mine is yours».

We are grateful for this time of updating that we are sharing with the whole Movement, a real educational community.

*the focolarini and the focolarine of the gen2 Schools in the Little Towns*

The presence of the various members of the Center of the Movement underlined the importance of the Little Towns at the service of the new generations.

We understood even more the methodology of Chiara that was born from the Charism. Following this path that has already been laid out, we developed an outline for a



# Social-One

## Reading love in society

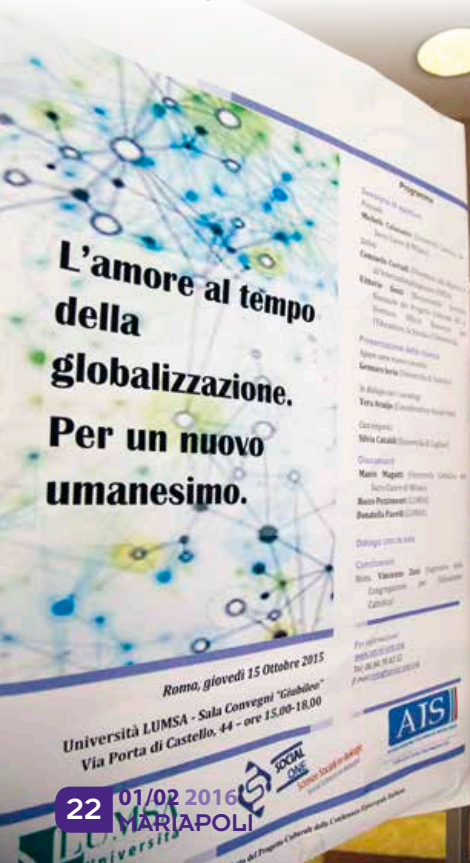
Three important stages in the journey of this Inundation

For some years now Social-One, Inundation of sociologia and social services, has undertaken a set course of study and research on an original and innovative topic in the ambit of social science: the social dimension of love. The encounter with the thoughts of some contemporary authors has led to a profound reflection on society and human relationships. What is the place of love in society? Can love, as a category of thought, help us to explain some social phenomena?

In order to answer these questions the recent experience of Social-One was concretized through - we can say - three big stages.

In spite of its scarce presence in the tradition of social sciences, there are some authors who have spoken about love; there are also existing books and essays that analyze some arguments that in various ways come close to it: gift, altruism, solidarity, reciprocity and others. And so, a first important step for Social-One is that of studying attentively everything that has been said in the social sciences about love, and to outline the differences with respect to those concepts that are apparently similar. A scholarship was established in 2014 at the University of Cagliari (Italy) for this topic, which made possible the start of an intense and fruitful course of study.

The meeting with many scholars was valuable, and in time they became passionate about this scientific and intellectual project, eventually becoming «travelling companions» of Social-One. A scientific committee was established composed of university professors





and experts on an international level: a network of persons who have given an important cultural contribution to the project, but above all it is an occasion to build relationships of great human value.

A second stage of the journey in these years was the meeting with those who could be defined as the «protagonists» of contemporary thought. Five scholars, in particular, were interviewed and with whom a dialogue was established: Luc Boltanski, Michael Burawoy, Anna Maria Campanini, Axel Honneth and Paulo Henrique Martins. A profound and conscious discussion took place with them on the opportunity that the concept of love presents to the modern social sciences.

Starting from Spring 2014 the research project on love received the support of the Cultural Project of the Italian Bishops' Conference. This is a very important recognition, which has given a stimulus and a visibility to the project also within the ecclesial community and which has supported its development and diffusion.

The third dimension of the project of Social-One is composed of a collection of case studies which makes love in the society «visibile»: the experience of interreligious dialogue among Christians and Muslims in a community in Maghreb, the practice of social

service in an Italian town, the offer of «suspended goods (assets)», which means consumer goods, like groceries, books or a simple cup of coffee, bought by a person and left «unclaimed» made available for whoever is in need at the moment. This prac-

tically includes all concrete actions that are manifested in the daily life of people, visible realities in which a relationship of love is expressed.

The book *L'amore al tempo della globalizzazione (Love in the time of globalization)*, published last May by Città Nuova, represents the final step of this long journey of Social-One. The book (see. *Mariapolis* n. 8-9/2015) was already presented on the occasion of two important conventions held at the La Sapienza and Lumsa Universities of Rome.

At the end of 2015 Social-One again experienced an important moment. Vera Araújo, who for many years was the one responsible for Social-One, aside from being the inspiration and first protagonist of the birth of the Inundations, handed over the responsibility to Silvia Cataldi, researcher in Sociology at the University of Cagliari. Vera continues to be a member of the central commission of Social-One and is bringing ahead many activities from Recife in Brazil, her place of origin, in the Little Town of Santa Maria.

For 2016 Social-One already has a long calendar of events in Italian and foreign Universities, together with many occasions to meet with other scholars: all possibilities to increase dialogue in the world of culture and to bring ahead the charisma of unity.

*Andrea Gallelli*



## Zone of Italy Builders of peace

Christians and Muslims together from various regions of Italy  
to bear witness to fraternity in action

A day-meeting that has contributed in deepening the relationship among the various Islamic communities and that of the Focolare spread throughout Italy: a step forward in taking direct responsibility to «go out» together towards the necessities of the Country, expressed in the title «Pact of Proximity and Collaboration» (see [www.cittanuova.it](http://www.cittanuova.it)). This is one of the fruits of the event held last December 13, which saw 450 people, Christians and Muslims, gathered together in Rome from the different regions of Italy to bear witness together that fraternity is possible: families and numerous youth, Imam, who came to share a journey consolidated throughout the years which on that occasion became more visible publicly, giving hope for a future journey together. They met again in St. Peter's Square and then continued to an adjacent hall at the Augustinianum, for a rich programme planned and prepared by the persons of the Movement and their Muslim friends.

What clearly emerged was the need to commit oneself in favour of the promotion of an education to peace, above all for the new generations. There was a great convergence on this topic especially from the ecclesial Movements present, such as the AGESCI and the Catholic Action, who openly expressed their desire to continue the collaboration that

has been started. Another important aspect was the national dimension of the event that gave a greater visibility to the many activities and manifestations for peace and dialogue among Christians and Muslims that took place in various parts of the Country.

An important encouragement came from Pope Francis who greeted the group during the *Angelus*. «I greet also the members of the Focolare Movement together with the friends of some Islamic communities. Go ahead! Go ahead with courage in your journey of dialogue and of fraternity, because we are all children of God!».

In an atmosphere of great listening and true joy for the very much appreciated words of the Pope, many experiences of communion and real fraternity were shared in the afternoon. Here are some excerpts: «Today in this hall the Holy Door was opened. Unarmed and in the name of God we cross the challenges of today to bring peace». «In this hall we are on the frontline of a war, but which war? If someone wants to build walls of division, we are on the frontline with weapons of trust, of collaboration, of reciprocal love, of dialogue. We cannot but be brothers and sisters». «Pope Francis encouraged us to work and to dialogue together, and his words are very important because it is a universal voice for peace».

*Aurora Nicosia*



## Sharing fears, to dialogue with all

Experiences of welcoming refugees and displaced persons by two local communities

«In some parts of our region - the community of Strehlen-Dresden in Germany wrote - there is a lot of resistance against the refugees, there is also a lot of fear. For this reason, we thought of an initiative for an open dialogue among everyone, to share the fears and uncertainties and to offer the possibility of encounter and of getting to know each other. Every Saturday afternoon we meet together with some of the groups of refugees in an atmosphere of benevolence and of mutual love. Families, children, students participate... Each time there is much generosity going around and a wide communion of goods and of talents takes place. We realized how love can change everything: people who are sad, closed within themselves, afraid, open up and we meet as brothers and sisters. In other local communities too our families are making the same experience. From Görlitz they shared with us: «We are discovering in a new way what our specific task is, that which Chiara has always told us: to be bringers of peace and unity!».

«One Sunday in my parish - a married focalarina from the province of Vicenza (Italy) shared - they distributed some flyers. They were asking among other things, for some volunteers to prepare, every fifteen days, baskets of goods for the families in need in



our city. I felt myself called to this and so in agreement with my husband, who is also a focalarina, I decided to commit myself to this activity. With the President of Caritas and another lady we try to fill the baskets with as much love as we can, trusting in Providence. Before Christmas the President explained to me that there were eight refugees that we could meet and get to know. Since he learned that our Focolare community was going to meet to exchange Christmas greetings, he asked me if it could also be the occasion to get to know these people. The whole community agreed and so there were seventy of us gathered together for lunch with these new friends. One of them shared his story. Together we also watched some flashes of the CH Link-up. A few days later, meeting us once again in the parish, the President of Caritas himself updated our parish priest: "It was very beautiful, they prepared everything themselves and did it well. Then we had a raffle where everyone was a winner and, if anyone was not happy with his or her prize they could exchange it with something else. This is something new for me. Now we can make the same experience here in the parish». Among those invited for the afternoon programme with the refugees there was also a friend who helped us in the translation. Embracing me she said: "What a marvelous Sunday we have had together"».

*Prepared by the editorial board*



## Gen Verde On The Other Side

The tour in Great Britain of the international music group Gen Verde: the power of their message to «put yourself in the other's shoes» in a particularly delicate moment for Europe and in an ecumenical and interreligious reality



Now more than ever there is a need to talk about peace, to bear witness to it, to take upon oneself the world's cry of pain and to answer with the power of hope that comes from dialogue. Dialogue with who seems to be light years away from me, to discover then the similarities often in the wounds that he bears. In this regard we would like to quote the song that begins the new concert of the Gen Verde which repeats with strength: «No one is a stranger to me».

«Many people have told us that this concert has the flavour of a political performance, because it deals with all the key questions that humanity is facing today» the focaline of Gen Verde wrote on their website speaking about their show «On The Other Side» which is on tour in the United Kingdom from October to December 2015. «This *tour* was requested and organized entirely by the Focolare community in Great Britain – explained Sally McAllister,

*manager* of the group. They told us that they wanted to open hands and hearts towards everyone and they wanted to do it together, to help rebuild relationships, to defeat hatred and distrust».

Shows, acoustic concerts and *workshops* brought the focaline to Scotland, Wales and England, performing in theatres, schools, for Catholic, Anglican and the «Church of Scotland» ecclesial communities. In the historical Anglican Cathedral of Ripon, in the northeast of England, the local community of the Focolare was in the frontline in the preparation of the events. «The past months – they shared – were a beautiful experience for us on the strength of a local community that works together for a common goal. The unique and indispensable contribution of each one brought ahead the planning and realization of the project through reciprocal and constant mutual encouragement to go beyond our limitations».

At Ripon, aside from the concert in the Cathedral, there was also a one day workshop for the youth with the presence of two Anglican Bishops who engaged in a lively dialogue with all those present. «Getting to know such a lively group in Ripon that is ethnically diverse was marvelous – one of





the youth in the workshop said. I was embarrassed to be speaking only one language. The Gen Verde interacted with all of us and for many of them, English was not their first language».

Echos of the concerts and the activities with the youth came from all over the cities where the Gen Verde worked also for interreligious dialogue: immediately after the conclusion of the project with the youth in London, the members of the Group went to the Islamic Center of Great Britain where the Imam, Dr. Mohammad Shomali, had organized a dinner party with a group of their youth to introduce to them both the spirituality of unity and also the Gen Verde. making a comparison of their life and that of the Focolare, he said that he has seen many of the values that are important to Muslims lived in fullness by our Movement. Dr. Shomali, extremely happy about the evening, affirmed: «In difficult moments such as those that we are now living, it is very important to meet and to show the world the friendship, and the trust that there is among us. I hope that we can work more together».

Among the youth there was an immediate agreement! One said: «This spirit is what I have always been looking for. How can I know more about it?».

One of the last appointments of the Gen Verde was the project for the youth of Birmingham which was held at the Nishkam School of the Sikh community. There were five different schools present with Muslim, Christian ad Sikh teenagers. A young girl said: «We come from very different communities but after this workshop it seems as if we had known each other forever». Among the *workshops* there was

indeed a very special one: four young Sikh musicians together with the Gen Verde, composed a totally new musical piece using traditional instruments such as the *sitar*, *tablas*, *dilruba* and *thaanpura* in a dialogue with the other instruments from all over the world. The final concert was an explosion of joy. At the end, the Gen Verde interviewed Bhai Sahib Ji, the person responsible for the Sikh community of Birmingham. He explained that the root cause of the great crisis of the family in Great Britain is the lack of a global educational programme: «Where are the values such as compassion, truth, happiness, humility and the ability to love? Where can our children learn them? Your message is very important - he continued - "On



The Other Side" means being the other; if we think only of ourself we will never get anywhere». The archbishop of Birmingham Bernard Longley also agreed: «We religious *leaders* of this city are encouraged to see that these values are taking root in the hearts and minds of the teens that you have met. We are certain that the seed that has been planted in them will blossom and bear much fruits».

*Alessandra Pasquali*

*Conclusa la tappa in Gran Bretagna, il Gen Verde continua il tour «On The Other Side». Nei mesi di gennaio e febbraio sarà in Asia ([www.genverde](http://www.genverde)).*

*In these past few months three focolarini of the early times joined Chiara in Heaven to recompose with her that first focolare where the Movement and all of us were generated. Aside from Silvana Veronesi, Dori Zamboni and, as we are preparing the layout of the newsletter, Turnea Giorgio Martelli (whose complete profile we will publish in the next issue), together with other eight focolarine and focolarini «left us» too. We will be including here their brief profiles. The complete telegrams of Emmaus for Silvana, Dori and Turnea and the profiles read at their funeral, are posted on [www.focolare.org/notiziariomariapoli](http://www.focolare.org/notiziariomariapoli) so as to give more space in this segment also to the other members of the Movement from other vocations who have left for the heavenly Mariapolis.*



## Silvana Veronesi

*The youngest among the twelve first companions of Chiara Lubich, Silvana Veronesi, joined her Spouse on December 2, bringing as her dowry the fulfillment of that particular design for the Movement which God had given her (1929 – 2015)*

Silvana was a very open and communicative person and not one who did things with half measures. She grew up in Trieste and in the '40s the family moved to Trent as a result of the Second World War, but also - we would like to think - because of a plan that God had prepared for Silvana. While still a young girl, a religious priest sent her to Chiara, whom, at that very first encounter, shared with Silvana her extraordinary discovery: God is Love, God loves us immensely. A truth that becomes overwhelming also for Silvana who soon after decided to make God the Ideal of her life too.

Some weeks later, seeing how Silvana took things very seriously, Chiara revealed the secret that motivated that first group of young girls: Jesus Forsaken, chosen as their all. Silvana recalls in her writings, «Chiara said that she wanted to love Jesus in a disinterested way and not because he gives us joy but only to respond to His unbounded love. She explained that Jesus had suffered the most when he was dying on the cross and had cried out, 'My God, my God why have you forsaken me', and that's where he suffered the most, and there also is his greatest love for us. She and her companions had decided to love him there. This was the secret of their group. She asked me if I wanted to share it with them and to choose to love Jesus for the whole of our lives. In that moment I was afraid, but then I understood

that pain can be transformed into love in every moment and I said "yes" to Chiara». It was a choice that never diminished. Even when, much later one, even if she felt - as she wrote in her diary - «the discomoft, the pain, the abandonment of my brothers, the harshness of certain situations», she continued to perceive that: «You have always been Love present in my life: a Father who provides for everything. And even when it seemed that there was little room for consolation, You were always there, with those small and often imperceptible personal touches that spoke to me of Your paternity, or of my being your child».

After those first years with Chiara in Piazza Cappucini and the dazzling experience during the summer of '49 at the mountain cabin named Paradise, she started to attend the School of Medicine in Florence. The new light which had transformed her life was a witness to the group of young men and women who formed the first Focolare community in Tuscany. She subsequently went to Turin and then Milan. Eventually in 1960, she travelled to the United States and Canada and she founded the Movement in that continent.

From the early years with Chiara, a particular design was starting to stand out in Silvana, which Chiara in 1952 described in this way: «*Silvana is the idea of the first branch, the branch of the focolarine, the "popa" par excellence: Mary the Child who*





at 15 years old gave birth to Jesus». Towards the end of '61 Silvana is at the School of formation for the young girls called to the focolare, to which she gave the typical imprint of the charism, which made them totally belong to God and completely open to the world. In October '62 Chiara entrusted to her the women's branch of the focolarineworldwide.

From '73 to '90 with Peppuccio Zanghì she was entrusted with the gen Movement. Those were intense years, during which three generations flourished and, because of the wise and enlightened guidance of the two persons responsible, the youth themselves were able to elaborate the major guidelines of the newly born Movement. «Silvana – as shared by Victoria Gomez, who had worked beside her for many years at the gen center – allowed the best of us to emerge, making us aware that from us, being children of the charism of unity, the world had the right to expect something beautiful and great». For a period of time she also shared the responsibility for the aspect of Communication of the Movement which in the meantime had spread all over the world.

Loppiano agosto 1983. Con Turnea alla Scuola Gen2



In all the ambits where Silvanella - as Chiara fondly called her - worked, her donation to God reflected the freshness of that "first love", the simplicity and purity of a girl who at the age of 15 encounters her great love and never leaves Him. She lived in a complete way the words from John's Gospel that Chiara had chosen for her as a program to live: "I am the way, the truth and the life." (Jn 14:6)

From 1990 to 2002 she once again had the responsibility for the focolarine and subsequently the Zones of Central Europe. She travelled to many countries there, bringing the love and the light of Chiara, continuing to do what she had done when she was very young, to build the Movement with Chiara. It was in this period that she became seriously ill. Immediately with that generosity of spirit that was so characteristic of her, Silvana renewed her «yes» to God. After a major surgical operation, she wrote to the focolarine in April 10, 2003: «This period, living and offering for Chiara and for our people in Iraq, has been a new experience for me. But I felt that I was continuing along the line that we had said to each other during our meeting last Christmas: "To lose" that is the most direct road to lead us closer to what we must be "the continuation of Mary", which is our vocation for the Church and the world today».

In the years that followed, Silvana continued her race towards God, offering «every moment of my life – she wrote to Emmaus on September 21, 2015 – to contribute to the commitment of the whole Movement to live the charism».

In the final months, she had a relapse and was gravely ill. Silvana, as always docile to the will of God, continued to love up to the end, a faithful fulfillment of her design. One of the most beautiful visits she had before leaving this world, was by a group of young girls who came to thank her on behalf of all the young people of the world.

She relived with them her first meeting with Chiara Lubich: «We realised that we had only one life to live. If we had three or four, we could spend it in so many ways, but since we only have one, it is worth spending it well, for something great, for something worthwhile. That something which remains is God, and we have made God the Ideal of our lives». This is her legacy also for all of

# Doriana Zamboni

*Another of the very first companions of Chiara – Doriana (Dori) Zamboni – took flight for Paradise on December 26 She left a trail of light and concrete love for the whole Movement*



Creativity and a rich imagination is something that Dori had in abundance. Sometimes this compromised her concentration so much so that one day - as she was travelling to Rome by train, and wanted to prepare for a meeting with Chiara but her mind always wandered onto so many things and she could not concentrate. At one point she said to Jesus that once and for all she was giving her imagination to him; she did not want to daydream anymore, staying out of the present moment. Once she had arrived, with other first focolarine, Chiara told them that she felt it was time to do something to give the Ideal to as many people as possible, making use of new means. So she asked each of them to write a book of their life experiences. Turning to Dori, she said:



areas to visit the poor. During one of these visits, she got an infection on her face. Dori shared: «It was cold and because my parents had forbidden me to go out, Chiara asked a Capuchin priest to bring me Communion.» It was on that occasion that the priest told Chiara that “the moment Jesus suffered the most was when he cried out: My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? As soon as the priest left, I turned to Chiara, certain of an explanation. She said: “If Jesus’ greatest suffering was the abandonment by the Father, let us choose him as our Ideal and let’s follow him like that.” At that moment, in my mind, in my imagination, I had the strong conviction that our Ideal was Jesus, with that tormented face, crying out to the Father. And the poor sores on my face, which seemed but shadows of his pain, gave me joy, because they made me a bit like him. From that day on, Chiara often, indeed always, spoke to me about Jesus forsaken. He was the most important person in our life».

From 1958 to 1975, she spent time in France, Belgium, Great Britain and Scandinavia. Everywhere, she sowed and harvested Love, the fruit of her deep communion with Jesus Forsaken in those who resembled him most.

From 1976 to the year 2002 Chiara entrusted the branch of the volunteer women to Dori. Those were decisive years in forming and building up this vocation of the Movement. Dori knew how to guide it to become an ever more efficient instrument for the renewal of society; She studied together with the women Volunteers the guidelines and programmes, preparing everything so that these would accurately reflect and represent the branch at the General Council.

Another of her precious collaborations was with the editorial board of Città Nuova. Open to new

“You have a lot of imagination, write a love story!” That was the beginning of the book: *Love at high altitude*. (Città Nuova, 1969).

Dori was 17 when she met Chiara. She was conquered by this teacher who was just a few years older than her but who spoke in a way that she had never heard of before, and so she asked her help in studying again to regain the year that she had failed at school. Between one lesson and another Chiara explained the various phrases of the Gospel and Dori began to follow Chiara in everything: loving everyone she met, going to mass every morning with her, she would go to the slum

things and to various cultural and social dynamics, during the meetings of the editorial board – in which she participated assiduously for many years – she helped the editors to see the affairs of the times and those of the past from a much higher standpoint. She asked everyone to discern the signs of the times, and among those, the ones that showed the way forward, however difficult it might be, towards a united world. She listened with particular attention to the young people to whom she always gave her complete trust. Editor and writer herself, she contributed actively through numerous articles for the magazine and different volumes published by the printing press, among which are: *Quando il dolore bussa forte* {When suffering knocks loudly} (1976), *Il dialogo delle ginestre* [Dialogue with the gorse] (1992), *Giovani tra droga e speranza* [Youth between drugs and hope] (1997), *Quando Dio interviene* [When God intervenes] (2004). St. Paul Publications published her book *I Fioretti di Chiara e dei Focolari* (2002).

«Remain in my love» (Jn 15,9) was the Word of the Gospel that Chiara chose for her. Dori replied to a gen girl who asked how she lived this phrase: «To remain means to stop, not to run, not to search, not to worry, not to think about yesterday or tomorrow. To remain means peace and fidelity. But it is necessary to remain in His love. One can remain in love, which means to love, to be always available and ready to help the others. But His love is love for the Kingdom, for unity, for the truth even if it hurts. His love for the Cross. Therefore my Word also means: to remain in Jesus Forsaken of the present moment, not to escape and to look for solutions, but to remain loving. To remain in Jesus Forsaken, in God. For me - if I live this - it is the means and the goal of my life. it is always something to be lived and if I live it then unity is achieved».

The first witness to the revelation of Jesus Forsaken to Chiara, Dori made Him the *leit motiv* of her life. And He excavated abysses in her soul which transformed her into love. A married focolarina of her focolare shared that one day, Dori received some clothes from providence, and so she wanted to give her clothing allowance to her so that she too could buy

«something beautiful». A European focolarino, speaking about Dori's life, expressed his gratitude for «having been loved by her with wisdom and... creativity!».

It's 1964. This time too Dori is on a train: a favourable occasion to make an assessment of her life and that of the Movement. These are some thoughts that she later shared with the focolarino: "I asked myself why those experiences and facts that the whole world knew and that used to happen before no longer happened now. How come when we want to say something we have to go back to the early times? [...] I thought about what could be the reasons for this: the colors that must be respected, the meetings, programmes and not to mention money which, to tell you the truth is not as scarce as it was before. [...] I realized that we didn't have within us the love that we should have for our neighbours, that innocent, simple and real recognition of Jesus in the brother who passes beside us: in the condominium, in the train, in the office, in the tram. At times [...] we make a distinction among the annoying person, those who are a bit old or extravagant; but these people must be the most lovable Jesuses for us. Remember those words "I have only one Spouse on earth": thirsting for suffering, anguish, desperation, everything that is him. [...] That's why I felt that we must make a real conversion, which means to truly love Jesus in the neighbour. If we don't live in this way, the ideal in us becomes vinegar and we become sour».

These reflections of Dori are a consignment also for all of us so that the charism can continue to maintain its freshness, reliving the experiences of the early times in a present which, just as before, is waiting for this gift.

Castel Gandolfo, ottobre 2014.  
Con Patience Lobe e Paolo Mottironi  
all'Assemblea delle e dei volontari di Dio





## us. Narcisse Stevanato

*«Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God» (Jn 1,12)*

Narcisse, one of the first married focolarini from France, returned to

the Father on November 24th. He was 85 years old. He was born in 1930 in Mogliano, Veneto (Treviso), Italy, and while he was still a young man he moved to France for work. In 1957 he married Nicole and they had three children. During a difficult moment in his marriage in '61 Narcisse met a member of the Movement while he was at the Italian Consulate in Marseille. The contact was very cordial, constructive and helped the couple

not to separate. They both committed themselves to the Movement: he as a married focolarino and she as a Volunteer.

Narcisse was a hard worker. He was employed by the Italian National Tourism Agency and then from 1968 until 1994 as the French National Director of "Aid to the Church in Need." Under his leadership, passion, competence and missionary spirit this organization had great growth. He was a tranquil type, but very concrete and always attentive to foster unity in the focolare and in his family. He sustained the community in the south of France and in the outskirts of Paris.

Nicole's health was quite fragile and for many years Narcisse took care of her with love, intensifying his presence beside her even up to the point of re-dimensioning his working schedule. After Nicole's death, Narcisse married again, to Jacqueline, and due to his health he was unable to frequent the focolare, but his great sensitivity to wisdom and to unity never diminished and he continued to pray and offer for the whole Movement.

## Milka Chiabrando Forni

*«I will refine them like silver and test them like gold.» (Zc 13,9)*

Married focolarina of the early times in Milan, she reached the heavenly mariapolis on December 3, 2015 at 96 years old. While still studying Literature she married Nino, engineer and businessman, and their family soon grew with 7 children. At 35 years old she met the Ideal and soon after her vocation to follow God in the way of Foco became clear. She confided to Chiara: «Jesus Forsaken appeared to me not only as the Spouse to love in every moment, but almost like a new sacrament from which to nourish myself and to live». She commits herself in New Humanity and in the dialogues of the Movement, especially with persons who do not have any religious faith. With her husband, who even if he did not participate in the Movement loved Chiara very much, they contributed actively in building the houses in Loppiano and in the development of the Movement.

Behind the encouragement of Paul VI, in '65 the Movement began organizing tours in the

former Soviet Union to bring the love and the closeness of the Pope there. Milka and her husband were invited to go on a cruise wherein the group (made up of around twenty persons of the Zone) would have travelled to different soviet Countries. There they would meet priests and persons chosen by Incontri Romani. On that occasion too, Milka acted with wisdom, warmth and intelligence, bringing an unparalleled contribution to the success of the whole trip, that was very fruitful.



Her humanistic formation and refined literary sensitivity were her source of inspiration to express – with the immediateness and simplicity of child of the Gospel - her sentiments towards her children, grandchildren and friends through delicate poems. And even up to her old age she gave Greek and Latin lessons to her grandchildren.

When she began to experience the symptoms of an illness that would eventually lead to her memory loss and the inability to speak, she confirmed her desire to give everything with her



# Patricia (Pat) McDonald

*«Whoever observes my word will never die» (Jn 8,51)*

Pat reached paradise on December 11 at the age of 91. Born in Sydney, she moved to Melbourne because of her husband Geoff's job. This is what she shared about her meeting with the focolarine: «I understood something that I never would have learned from books: that the Gospel must be lived in every moment of the day and that the Beatitudes are not only for saints and mystics but also for me, an Australian housewife in the suburbs of Melbourne».

Pat sknew how to welcome and to listen profoundly to every person of all ages and experiences, giving advice full of wisdom and opening her heart without any judgements. With her talents and delicate sense of *humour* she committed herself with great dedication to the growing Movement in Australia, collaborating for New Families and New Humanity.

After the death of Geoff she shared with Chiara the grace of having meditated on her newly published book *The Cry*. «Your words on Jesus who felt himself abandoned by the Father – she wrote – reminded me of what you said when you talked about the departure for Heaven of one of two spouses which is that it is as if “a small Trinity is broken”. I understood in a new and very beautiful light the love of God for me: I can live the separation from my husband in unity with the cry of Jesus Forsaken».

In 2013 her health began to decline. She wrote to Emmaus: «Now in my life there is an

constant smile. Here is the gratitude of the focolarine of Milan: «Milka, you have finally reached the Goal where “tears become diamonds and words become precious pearls”, as you often said, where you can embrace all those whom you have loved in your lifetime and to rejoice forever».

Now she rests in Loppiano beside her husband, who was among the first to be buried in the Little City.



unexpected will of God, a visit from our Spouse... I want to offer everything as my way of working for the Movement». In March 2015: «Like a daughter of Chiara I believe with all my heart that our life is in the hands of God, and that God is love». A few days before her «departure», with the little strength that

she had she told a focolarina: «All that I want is to do the will of God»

# Mariella Musicaro

*«I will not die, but I will continue to live, so as to proclaim the works of the Lord» [Ps 118 (117),17]*

An Italian focolarina who has been in Germany for many years, God called her to Himslef at the age of 78 on December 20.

Mariella was a dynamic, resolute young person with a strong character when she met God-Love and in him she found the answers to all her desires and the meaning of her life. At 20 years old she entered the focolare in Trapani as the first Sicilian focolarina and later she moved to Turin, Trieste, Loppiano – with Silvana Veronesi for the School of formation – then to Bari and Grottaferrata. In 1978 she moved to the various focolares of Ottmaring and Munich. Here, after having studied German with great passion, she worked as a social worker, a profession that was truly a service to Jesus in the brother.

Since she was a young girl Mariella had some health problems and this was a constant challenge for her, but she never gave up. She battled against her illness without surrendering to sadness and depression, so much so that her father returned to God and to the Church touched by her witness of life. Together with other persons with her same pathology, in 2010 Mariella founded in Munich,



a mutual support network. Welcoming, hospitable, merciful, she maintained contact with many and she never stopped sharing her talents especially in translating texts of the Movement from German to Italian.

The precious pearl of her life was her faithfulness to the exclusive choice of Jesus Forsaken. She wrote about Him in '71 to Chiara: «He is the treasure of treasures. I am passionate in my love

for Him and I savour in an ever increasing rhythm the continuous and always new profit, a fruit of losing». And in 2000: «The physical breakdown continues, trials and cutts come one after another, but my soul is singing, my union with God increases, my becoming one with the Spouse; profound root of His Love. From all this a new love for the focolarine, and for everyone sprouts and appears».

## Sebastiano (Nuzzo) Di Paola

*«Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house». (Mt 5,15)*

On December 29, Nuzzo, focolarino of the Roman Mariapolsi, 86 years old, left peacefully for Heaven. At 25 he met the Ideal and soon after he felt the call to the focolare. He lived in various focolare centers: Pescara, Turin, Sassari, Rome, Buenos Aires, then Loppiano and then back to Rome, the city where he taught literature and philosophy in a high school. At 58 years old, he was paralyzed by a stroke. In spite of the many physiotherapy and speech therapy treatments, he continued to experience great difficulty in walking and talking. Nuzzo is always surrounded by the love of the focolarini and especially by Chiara, and after one of her visits, he wrote to her with great difficulty: «Thank you for your visit and for the many gifts. I declare Jesus in the midst with you and offer with love every moment if my day for the development of the Movement».

In order to overcome his difficulty in communicating, Nuzzo began to use a typewriter and he does so, as he confided in a letter to Chiara, above all to renew the unity with her and with everyone. He continued, as much as was possible, his reflections on studies within the Movement. From his letters one could feel how much he was living for everyone, even if he was confined at home. He spent 27 years like this. Every week, before the focolare meeting, he would dictate his profound communion of soul to be read by everyone in the focolare. He had a great love for Jesus Forsaken that was visible



especially when, he never complained after the many falls and traumas that he experienced due to his condition, bearing with his immobility without making others feel the burden. In his final days, simultaneous with the transfer of his focolare, Nuzzo has a strong surge in loving, showing

much attention for all the other sick focolarini and displaying a radiant joy.

## Archie Maclulich

*«Follow God's example, therefore, as dearly loved children and walk in the way of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.» (Eph 5,1-2)*

The first married focolarino of Scotland, Archie left suddenly for Heaven on December 30 at the age of 74. His father was Presbyterian and his mother was Catholic; he finished his studies in Education and Psychology. While he was teaching in the Isle of Skye he met Claudine, they married and had five children. In 1974 the whole family attended a Mariapolis and Archie



# Dan Mulvey

«I am with you always» [Ps 72(73), 23]

Married focolarino of Texas, he reached the heavenly Mariapolis on January 16 at 69 years old. In 1978 with his wife Mary, who also later became a married focolarina, they met the Movement and his life took a decisive turnaround: «During the first years of our marriage – Dan shared - my way of searching for God was that of offering myself as a volunteer in many charitable organizations, but this kept me away from my family many evenings. I felt a certain dissatisfaction in these activities, but this was because I had not made the choice of God as my Ideal. He continued: «Once I decided to live the Gospel, especially the new commandment of Jesus, I understood clearly that in loving I could find God in every present moment».

In '93 he had to undergo a heart surgery which later led to other health problems that became more serious. He wrote to Chiara in '98: «I understood that my race can never slow down because the Holy Spirit shows us through you, always new horizons and our Ideal gives us the energy and the joy to run with you». In 2006 Dan begins dialysis. After having overcome a strong



crisis, he wrote again to Chiara: «Grateful to God for my improvement, I asked Him more graces to be able to say my “yes” to this illness and to receive with open arms the inevitable sufferings in the future» and he added:

«Through the gift of our spirituality, my darkness is transformed into Light and I feel closer than ever to God».

When the doctors told him that all possibilities for a cure have been exhausted, Dan welcomed with courage and serenity the will of God for him, saying that he offered his life for unity in the Movement.

The focolarini and many of the community can bear witness to having experienced a true brother in him, always close by especially to those who were passing through difficult moments. His presence in the focolare – as his new name expresses «*Dani=strada d'unità (road to unity)*» – made Jesus in the midst easier and brought a supernatural atmosphere. His funeral was celebrated in Dallas by Mons. Michael, his brother who is a Bishop.

commented: «There we understood that the Ideal was the absolute realization of our life». Archie worked as a psychologist in a center for children with psychological disturbances. Humanly speaking, not much could be done to change certain situations, but through the spirituality of the Movement he felt «a new call to live as much as possible for God also in this environment, living the same experience of Jesus Forsaken».

In '89 his first heart attack obliges him to spend six months in recovery; in the succeeding years too, he had to take care of himself, undergoing various therapies and heart operations. Archie and Claudine move to Edinburgh and he involves himself especially in a social project being done in common by the Catholic Church

and the Church of Scotland. He offered his experience and his ability to listen profoundly to assist as a consultant for the adoptions and he also took on research projects in the field of education. Together with his family, they also work together with other artists of Gaelic music, to record a CD of music and songs for the Mass. And throughout all these years he accompanied the Scottish community of the Movement with great generosity and readiness.

The focolarini said of him: «His was a Marian presence: he always moved with delicateness towards the others, he spoke with temperance and wisdom. In spite of his wide experience and his talents, he never placed himself in the limelight but was only at the service of others».

# Leo Andringa

«You O Lord, are my only Good» [Ps 15 (16), 2]

Married focolarino of Holland and member of the international Commission of the Economy of Communion, Leo left for Heaven on January 22 at the age of 78. He leaves behind his wife Anneke, Volunteer, four children and 10 grandchildren.

A recognized economist he had taken up responsibilities in the Ministry of Finance and the National Bank, promoting a managerial organization according to the criteria of the seven aspects.

When Chiara launched the Economy of Communion, Leo immediately committed himself to promoting it. He wrote her: «You have completely renewed my personal and married life, now you are also renewing my knowledge and my vision of economy». In 2005, already retired, he placed himself even more at the disposition of the EoC and Chiara asked him to collaborate in the general coordination of this project. In a very short time Anneke and Leo were able to sell their house in Holland and they moved to the Center of the Movement, where they stayed for nine years.

In October 2006 he was diagnosed with a serious illness. «I felt an immense joy – Leo wrote to Chiara – almost like a “flight towards God” which



was pulling me into His grandiose plan revealed to you for humanity. Sharing this experience with my wife, she too immediately felt the joy of participating in this great adventure with God».

In spite of his health, Leo continued to work and travel, putting his professional talents and wisdom at the service of the Movement. He also worked

to look for funds for the Sophia University in Loppiano. The dean Piero Coda wrote of him: «He strongly believed in the project of Sophia and he always told us: “The money will come, what is important is to have the right idea. Here there is the idea and therefore the money will not be lacking”». In the website of Sophia the students thank him «for the fecundity of his life and for his donation» and they conclude: «Thank you Leo! Please continue to look after us».

He will be buried in the little town of Mariënkroon in Holland, where he lived since 2013.

Let us remember Leo for his generosity and passion, his desire for transparency and honesty. Now we think of him as having arrived to enrich the heavenly mariapolis, and we believe that he will continue to work with us so that here on earth fraternity and the unity desired by God will be lived more and more.



## d. Sebastião Marques Fernandes

«Your Word is my joy»  
(Jer 15,16)

The second of eight siblings, Fr. Sebastião, priest focolarino of Castelo Branco (Portugal), returned to the Father's House on April 7, 2015 at the age of 75. In 1971 he participated in the summer Mariapolis of Fatima and discovered the profound meaning of his being a priest

«which is not something of the mind – he said – but of the heart». In '75 he attended the Priests' School of Frascati (Rome) and there he celebrated his “marriage” with Jesus Forsaken.

He returned to Portugal and lived in great communion with his Diocese which entrusted to him the administration of the diocesan College for the youth, «so that his kindness will remind the young people of the great educator St. John Bosco». Successively, with another priest focolarino, he was called to build – what was a new experience at that time – a pastoral unit formed by several priests who together take care of some parishes. One of them, who was ill and was accompanied by Fr. Sebastiao for many years said: «I am grateful to Fr. Sebastiao because he was like a brother to me».

## d. Raffaele (Rafe) Beltrame

*Completely given to God  
and to the neighbour*

Priest focolarino missionary in Oceania, Fr. Rafe left this world of December 19 at the age of 86. Born in a small town of Treviso (Italy), ever since he was small he had a special love for Mary and at 12 years old he entered the seminary. Two years after his ordination he left to become the chaplain for Italian immigrants in Wogga Wogga, a remote diocese in Australia.

In 1971 he met the Ideal of unity which he immediately makes his own and in '77 he attended the priests' school in Rocca di Papa. His marked ability to communicate with those who suffer, made him open and welcoming towards all his parishioners, helping them in the difficult moments and bringing them to God. In spite of the predominantly Italian community, Fr. Rafe was able to form a multicultural parish council. At the same time he also gained the respect of the faithful of the other Churches, some of them even became members of the Movement.

His love for Jesus was visibly alive in his homilies and in his ability to create the atmosphere of a



family around him. The Bishop entrusts him with the care of the new priests. Sensitive and faithful to the life of unity, Fr. Rafe does not hesitate to travel up to 500 kms. just to be able to attend the monthly focolare meetings.

When he retired he dedicated himself to assisting those people in hospice care where he also spent the last years of his life. At his funeral, concelebrated by two Bishops and 28 priests, around a thousand people came, in an atmosphere of joy and profound gratitude for his life that was completely given to God at the service of the brother.

*Augustine (Yob) Doronila*

## Cerise Lawson Tancred

*«We must treat the others like Vip»*

Volunteer of God from Luxford (England) Cerise left for the heavenly Mariapolis at the age of 89 last April 20, 2015. She was born in a prestigious English family, a practicing Anglican for whom Christianity had become an integral part of her life. Since she was a young girl she contributed - among other things - to the foundation of Club Good Friends for disadvantaged children.

In the sixties Cerise was among the first in England who met the Movement and to commit herself to it. She learned how to «make one» in every situation, to love the rich and the poor, young and old, persons of all nationalities and beliefs. Her motto was: «treat everyone like a VIP». In spite of her obvious social status, Cerise was a very humble person who wanted only to serve Jesus in every neighbour: a landowner, a labourer, a child. She never lost the occasion to love, to listen and to answer whoever was in need. She bought many books from New City which she gave away, so that many could find comfort and inspiration from them.

A wife and a caring mother, when her husband Christopher, a lawyer, became an Anglican

A man who met the Movement through Fr. Sebastiao shared: «he was a pure soul. Even in the harshest adversities he always had a word of comfort. His door was always open. In his vocabulary the word “no” did not exist. He was always happy. He used to say: «Do you know what the uniform of a Christian is? It is the smile». Another priest said: «Simple, humble, he knew how to highlight the qualities of the others, while he put himself in the last place».

Particularly devoted to Mary, he had a profound communion with Jesus Forsaken whom he tried to love «always, at once and with joy». This would be his last words. The Diocese remembers his passion for Christ and for the Gospel, a contemplative of the love of God for the world, totally given to his priestly ministry, united to Christ and at the service of the brothers in the Church.

*Antônio Assunção, Jorge Guarda*

minister, she took on with him this difficult task and contributed in creating the community in infinite ways. Her support was decisive when – in the thick of the unrest in Northern Ireland - about a hundred youth from Belfast, Catholics and Protestants, went to stay in Wrrington. Her active presence among them helped to keep the relationship among them peaceful and fruitful.

For a period of time Cerise also had the responsibility for New Humanity, lending her support to numerous social initiatives. Her life may seem easy, but for those who knew her well it was evident that her going towards the others is a fruit of an interior life: prayer and the love for Jesus Forsaken, whom Cerise considered as her best friend, He who taught her how to love. During the testimonies given at her funeral, shared also by her children, what emerged was the generous courage of a humble woman and her reliving the virtues of Mary. Her example continues to inspire many.

*Stella Worthington*

## Italo Scrivano

*«So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live your lives in him, rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith» (Col 2,6-7)*



On April 16, 2015 Italo, a committed member of New Families of Liguria (Italy), left this world at the age of 90. Meek, jovial, playful, but also possessing an intelligent seriousness, as a young man he distinguished himself in his service to others: in the parish, in the various committees in the school of his children, in the political and administrative life of the city. For twenty-five years he served as a stretcher bearer in Lourdes and for fifteen years he was a collaborator of the Radio Maria and of the ACLI.

In '76 he met the Ideal. He was fascinated by it and together with his wife Mariangela they adhered with enthusiasm to this new life. «I received more than I have given» Italo often repeated and together as a family they placed their seaside home

at the disposition of the focolarini and the families. To live for the Opera was a privilege and a joy for Italo which was made evident by his giving himself for the others. Those who met him were conquered. Ten years ago he was diagnosed with a serious illness which he was able to overcome through the intercession of Blessed Chiara Luce Badano, whose parents Italo and Mariangela stayed close to to give them comfort. With his recovery Italo was able to resume his active life in the Movement.

In his final year, due to his old age, the meetings with the families were held in his house, so that he could continue to give his contribution.

At the funeral many people from all walks of life (authorities, representatives of associations, friends and a numerous presence of the Movement) came to share their testimonies, a visible sign of the abundant sowing that Italo had done during his lifetime.

*Maria e Mario Lassalaz*

## Pasquale Di Iorio

*A blank book filled by the docility to the will of God*

One of the first committed members of the parish of Ischia (Naples) he reached the heavenly Mariapolis on April 8, 2015 at the age of 64 anni, leaving behind him a luminous trail of love and good works. With his wife Angelina, in a difficult moment of their life – the loss of little Maurizio, their third child - he met the spirituality of the Focolare that transformed their suffering into a fragrant piece of bread broken and offered to ease the hunger and to satisfy many. Pasquale was all this for whoever he met, in the family, in his work as a gardener, in the parish. After some time other two children arrived to give joy to their family.

Pasquale allowed himself to be worked and polished by the Holy Spirit, building profound relationships with whoever he met. He knew how to love in a natural, direct and concrete way, ready to get involved with his disarming simplicity. Everyone was impressed by his helpfulness, his sincerity, his being always at the service of others and of the community. He loved the Church very much with a great passion and hoped that it could become a living and outgoing Church.

After various exams an inexorable diagnosis arrived. Pasquale confided: «I saw a blank book, that must be filled up by docility to the will of God».

Angelina added: «After those first moments of bewilderment, together we abandoned ourselves in the hands of the Father, we told Him all our suffering and, helped by the family of the Movement, who immediately gathered around us, we looked to Mary, who also in the passion of her Son, said her unconditional "yes". She was our *stabat ...*». In this atmosphere, in full awareness, Pasquale offered his life for the family of the Movement, for whom he had untiringly given his life.

*dalla segreteria centrale del Mov. Parrocchiale*



## William (Bill) Robert Ruse

*«Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness!» (Mt 25:23)*

Bill, one of the first Volunteers of God in Oceania left for the heavenly Mariapolis last December 18 at the age of 93. Before meeting the Movement, together with his wife Jill and their four children they spent three years in the Catholic Mission in Papua Nuova Guinea, where Bill worked as an electrician in the construction of a new school: a splendid experience in preparation for his encounter with the Movement that happened immediately after they returned to Australia.

In 1977 Bill participated in his first Volunteer's congress in Rocca di Papa. His peaceful nature and his sense of humour impressed everyone, so much so that he is remembered by all those present even after many years. Passionate about technology, he introduced the «Telephone Nucleus», a link-up that he himself set-up to allow those who could not travel, to continue to live together the life of the nucleus. And just a year ago, he took the initiative to set-up a video-conference call among all the men Volunteers of Oceania because «it is beautiful to listen to the voices of everyone, but it is even more beautiful to be able to see each other». What has truly characterized Bill was his faithfulness: at work, with his friends, and in his relationship with God. With his wife Jill

they dedicated themselves with love to the raising of their children. Two of them become members of the Movement: Corre focolarina living in the focolare and Mark a married focolarino.

In his final years, due to his health, Bill could no longer participate in the meetings but he was always linked up by telephone: everyone was always touched by his enthusiasm and sense of humour.

As his health declined, Bill had a continuous stream of visitors: Volunteers, friends, focolarini and focolarine. Even if he could no longer speak, he would thank each one with his eyes and with those close to him it was an occasion to build the presence of Jesus in the midst and to renew the Pact of unity.

*Augustine (Yob) Doronila*

## Our relatives

The following have passed on to the Next Life: **Irene, mother of Donata Genovese**, focolarina in Turin; **Maria, mother of Erika Ivacson**, focolarina in Loppiano; **Jin Sang, father of Ricor Lee**, and **Victor, brother of Marla Fisico**, focolarine at the Roman Mariapolis; **Vieri, brother of Valeria Masini**, focolarina in Florence; **Bill, father of Corre and of Mark Ruse**, focolarini in Australia; the mother and the sister of **Marilen Nkafu**, focolarina in Fontem; **the brother of Maria Gennaro**, focolarina in Montet; the brother of **Juliana (Lia) Pimentel Coelho**, focolarina in Joao Pessoa (Brazil); the father of **Tania Maria Stimamiglio**, focolarina in Florianopolis (Brazil); **Giuseppe, father of Tamami Koakutsu**, focolarina in Nagasaki and of **Naomi**, married focolarina in Tokyo; **Benedetto, father of Adelson Oliveira**, focolarino in Loppiano; **Marie Louise and Raymond Chevalier, parents of Christianne and of Marie Elisabeth Chevalier**, focolarine in France; **Deogratias, brother of Christine Naluyange**, focolarina in Iringa (Tanzania); **Maqboula, mother of Gemma Al Sawalha**, focolarina in Jordan; **Nellina, mother of Romilda Cajazzo**, married focolarina of the zonetta of Napoles; **Ada, sister of Rosa Calò**, married focolarina of the Roman Mariapolis; **Jean, father of Robert Chadourne**, focolarino at the Center of the Movement.

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