

IDEA DEL MESE

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Casting light upon life

Light has always symbolized life. Every day we await the dawn as the harbinger of a new beginning.

The theme of light has often featured in the histories of peoples and in ancient religions. Jewish tradition celebrates Hannukah, the festival of lights, which commemorates the rededication of the Temple in Jerusalem and the liberation from pagan cults. Some Muslims light candles on the day of the prophet's birth, known as Mawlid in Arabic or Mevlid Kandili in Turkish. Diwali, the Hindu festival of lights, is also celebrated in other Indian religions and symbolises the victory of good over evil. For Christians, Jesus Christ is the light that illuminates the darkness of the world. Light, therefore, is charged with strong symbolism.

Is there a relationship between the symbolism of light and our daily lives?

If light symbolises life then we can say we relate to it whenever we promote peace or try to love our neighbours because we are casting light upon the changes and challenges of different aspects of our lives. This happens if we avoid lethargy and apathy, are as vigilant as possible and are ready to respond with good to whatever happens around us. The decision to live each moment fully is a choice of love that all human beings can make.

Sometimes we can become accustomed to living in the darkness of our hearts and be content with the many false lights around us and the world's various promises of happiness. Effort is needed to start afresh, turn from darkness to light, love and do good to others.

This year's earthquake in Turkey and Syria, which claimed more than 50,000 victims, turned the lives of millions of people upside down. Those who survived the catastrophe, entire communities from the place where it happened and other countries, have been points of strength and courage in their efforts to bring immediate aid and provide relief to those who lost loved ones, homes, everything, and where the light seemed to disappear forever.

True love can do anything (the Latin poet Virgil said *omnia vincit amor*: love can do anything). If we are sure of this, we will not be surprised or crushed by the events that may upset us.

THE IDEA OF THE MONTH, based on the Word of Life of the Focolare Movement, was born in Uruguay as part of the dialogue between people of different convictions, whose motto is "building dialogue". The purpose of this publication is to help promote the ideal of universal fraternity. The IDEA OF THE MONTH is currently translated into 12 languages and distributed in more than 25 countries