

Press Release

4 December 2023

THE 80TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FOCOLARE MOVEMENT

On 7th December, Pope Francis will receive in audience the President of the Focolare Movement, Margaret Karram, together with those who are responsible for the Movement in the world. At 6pm, there will be a Eucharistic celebration in the Basilica of St. Mary Major in Rome, presided over by H.E. Cardinal Kevin Joseph Farrell, Prefect of the Dicastery for the Laity, Family and Life.

7th December 1943 marks the official birth of the Focolare Movement, the day on which Chiara Lubich consecrated herself to God forever. 80 years ago, a small community was born, which amidst the destruction of the Second World War wanted to rebuild peace and unity among all, and which would soon spread throughout the world, becoming part of the reality of New Charisms of the Church. At the heart of the Focolare's spirituality and action is the Gospel and in particular Jesus' prayer: "That all may be one" (Jn 17:21).

Today the Movement is present in 182 countries, a sign of the universality and urgency of unity and fraternity in these fragmented and tragic times. It also includes Christians of various Churches, believers of numerous Religions and people without a precise religious affiliation.

On 7th December next, Pope Francis will receive in audience Margaret Karram, President of the Focolare Movement, Jesús Morán, Co-President and the group of those who are responsible for the Movement. "To be received by the Holy Father on 7th December 2023, exactly eighty years after Chiara Lubich's first 'yes' to God, is an extraordinary and surprising gift for us," explains the President. "We want to bring to the Pope the love and affection of the thousands of people around the world who live the Charism of unity and renew our service to the Church in this synodal journey, in collaboration with so many others who want to contribute to peace and love to alleviate the wounds of humanity".

At 6 p.m. on the same day, in the Basilica of St. Mary Major, there will be a Mass of thanksgiving for these 80 years of Focolare life presided over by Cardinal Kevin Joseph Farrell, Prefect of the Dicastery for the Laity, Family and Life, together with several other cardinals, bishops and priests.

Margaret Karram goes on to explain, " This day will be the conclusion of a pilgrimage that we wanted to make to some sacred and significant places in Assisi, Loreto and Rome so as to give thanks, to ask for forgiveness and to start again with courage and hope.

Focolare communities around the world will also live this anniversary with the same spirit and aims, so as to be "witnesses of proximity with fraternal love that overcomes every barrier and reaches every human situation "¹.

Method of accreditation

Journalists and media operators who intend to participate in the Holy Mass of 7th December 2023 at 6pm in the Basilica of Saint Mary Major must send a request, within 48 hours of the event, through the online accreditation system of the Holy See Press Office, to the address

press.vatican.va/accreditations

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¹ Talk of Pope Francis to the General Assembly of the Focolare Movement – 6 February 2021
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