

MARIAPOLIS

NEWSLETTER OF THE FOCOLARE MOVEMENT

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Complete amnesty

"Unity must triumph: unity with God and unity among all people."

How can this be done? By loving everyone with the merciful love that characterized the Focolare at its beginnings, when we decided that each morning and all through the day we would look upon every person we met - at home, at school, at work, everywhere - as a new person, brand new, deliberately not remembering any of their faults and failings, but covering everything over with love. [...] We wanted to approach everyone with this complete amnesty in our hearts, with this universal forgiveness."

Chiara Lubich

(From: C. Lubich, Collegamento CH, 15th October 1981)



"I think that a wave of prayer in the world should start from now on from all those who are interested in the continuation of Chiara's work," said Maria Voce during the last Link_Up, speaking about the path of preparation for the next General Assembly of the Focolare Movement, which will be held from August 31 to September 19, 2020. For this a special prayer has been elaborated.

Eternal Father, in preparation for the 2020 General Assembly of the Work of Mary, and united with all the members of the Movement spread throughout the world, we ask you with faith for the grace of the constant presence of Jesus in our midst.

*Help us to listen always to the Holy Spirit. May He guide our work and enlighten our minds and hearts with the light of His Wisdom.
Amen.*



Message from Maria Voce

20 January 2020

*Message from Maria Voce,
President of the Focolare Movement*

Today is January the 22nd, 2020.

One hundred years ago, on January 22nd 1920, Chiara Lubich was born.

Today, a global hymn of thanksgiving rises to Heaven for the immense gift that God gave to the world with the birth of Chiara.

Chiara was a woman who lived so that all people in the world could rediscover one another as brothers and sisters. She lived so as to build the family of God's children, united by mutual love. She did this day after day, establishing relationships with all the people she met, not stopping at differences in culture, religion, sex, ethnicity or age. Chiara was convinced that God is the Father of all and so all people are brothers and sisters.

I believe her message of unity is still extremely relevant today. It is important because currents of division and narrow political interests are continually emerging. New walls and new frontiers continue to appear. I feel a compelling desire to focus once again on our one goal, which is the same for all of us: to live and act in order to build a world that is different from the one in which we live, a united world, according to Jesus'

vision, "May they all be one".

This is why the title we have chosen for the centenary is "Celebrate to meet". We do not want to remember Chiara in a nostalgic way but to meet Chiara. She is living in the spirit that she shared with us, in the Movement she founded and in the countless people, scattered throughout the world, who have followed her.

And so, I invite all of you who have ever met Chiara and her charism - whether you are currently in touch with the Movement or not - to live what is perhaps our main characteristic: to be people who can create relationships and welcome others without prejudices, without preconceptions and without agendas, and be bridges for others.

Let us celebrate Chiara's anniversary. Let us take ahead her message, the great dream of unity. Let us celebrate and let us do it all together - Chiara can see us and wants us to be united - by participating in the various events that will be held around the world and in particular the ones taking place in Trent, her hometown, and at the International Centre of the Movement here in Rocca di Papa.

*Be sure that with great joy
we are looking forward to welcoming you!*

Strength in meekness: President Mattarella in Trento recalls Chiara Lubich



"One can be very strong even though one is meek and open to others' good reasons", or rather, "only in this way can one be truly strong": this is the teaching of Chiara Lubich in the words of Mattarella, who takes up Maria Voce's invitation to "dialogue to the extreme".

On 25th of January the Head of State, present at a commemorating event for the centenary of Chiara Lubich's birth at the Mariapolis Centre "Chiara Lubich" in Cadine (Italy), recalled with enthusiasm the founder of the Focolare Movement. He was welcomed by Maria Voce, president of the Movement, and by the local authorities and population: more than 400 people were present in the hall, about 500 connected in other rooms in Cadine and in Trento and more than 20 thousand following the live streaming. The artistic dimension, directed by Fernando Muraca, was the background to the narration, retracing the most significant moments of Chiara's life as a woman in relationship.

The voices of civil and ecclesial authorities were interwoven through sounds and images. The president of the Provincia Autonoma di Trento, Maurizio Fugatti, underlined how Chiara represents, together with people like De Gasperi, "*the excellence of this land*". Chiara highlighted three characteristics of this Trentino area: willpower, the Cooperative Movement, and being a frontier land. He said "*Chiara was able to interpret this belonging which is a distinctive feature of our autonomy, of our specificity*". The Archbishop of Trent, Mgr. Lauro Tisi, thanking his predecessor Carlo De Ferrari who at the time grasped "*the finger of God*" in Chiara Lubich's spirituality, recalled how "*if today the charism embraces the whole of humanity we owe it to this bishop, who protected it*"; and he highlighted the frustration of "*Christ abandoned*" as that which makes

it so relevant today. Alessandro Andreatta, mayor of Trento, expressed his joy in remembering "*the girl who almost eighty years ago put herself at the service of the poor*" and who "*continues today to invite us to openness, to welcome, to commitment for others and with others*". From the beginning Chiara's experience was not a personal, isolated, solitary experience, but a commitment that can only be understood if seen in the light of the paradigm of relationship.

There followed numerous testimonies, which tell of the tenacity in daily life of people who have been, and are, inspired by Chiara and her charism in their actions: such as Amy Uelman, professor of ethics and law at Georgetown University in Washington, who trains her students to deal with divisive issues while avoiding clashes; entrepreneurs Lawrence Chong and Stanislaw Lencz, who with their companies contribute to a supportive and sustainable economy; Arthur Ngoy and Florance Mwanabute, Congolese doctors who dedicate themselves to the care of the weakest and to health care training; and the story of Yacine, an Algerian migrant, welcomed as a brother by some young Italians after the difficult journey through the Balkans. There was also the story of the former mayor of Trento, Alberto Pacher, who together with teachers and students has welcomed the invitation – through the phone call of a child - from which emerged the projects Tuttopace and Trento a city to educate.



The archbishop of Trento, Lauro Tisi.

"The light given to Chiara goes beyond the boundaries of the Focolare Movement and reaches out to encourage and inspire many, women and men of good will in every part of the world, as this anniversary is showing," said Focolare President Maria Voce. *"Like each one of you,*

I feel Chiara is alive, present, active, close by every day. She pushes us to go out with courage". And she spurred everyone on: " We must respond with radicality, with the 'extremism of dialogue', nourished by a culture of trust, to this society that seems without roots and without a goal".

The evening concluded with a long and passionate speech by the President of the Republic, who identified in particular fraternity, applied to civil and political action, as the distinctive feature of Chiara Lubich's spirituality – also recalling with fondness Igino Giordani, whom Mattarella knew, and who was a first-rate interpreter of this spirituality. A fraternity

that is "the foundation of civilization and a motor of well-being", because without this "we risk not having the strength to overcome inequalities and heal social fractures". Chiara Lubich, vigorously proposing the culture of giving and dialogue, especially inter-religious dialogue, which "in this historical season is decisive for peace", had intuited "with a spirit of prophecy" what the way to follow was. A teaching that proves how "one can be very strong while being meek and open to others' good reasons. In fact, to be sincere, only in this way can one be truly strong as Chiara Lubich's life shows".

Stefania Tanesini



Bishops "At The School of The Holy Spirit"

A message from Pope Francis and a greeting from Focolare President, Maria Voce opened a conference of 7 Cardinals and 137 Catholic Bishops, friends of the Focolare from 50 different countries. The meeting in Trento, Northern Italy was entitled "A Charism at the service of the Church and humanity".

"It's good for Bishops too always to go back to the school of the Holy Spirit". This encouragement from Pope Francis on 8 February opened the international conference "A Charism at the service of the Church and humanity" in Trento. Taking part were 7 Cardinals and 137 Catholic bishops, friends of the Focolare Movement, representing 50 countries. In this centenary year of Chiara Lubich's birth, the meeting explored the significance and contribution of the Focolare charism of unity at the service of the Church and of humanity.

On 6 February a delegation of conference participants had an audience with Pope Francis, who exclaimed, "You've brought me joy, go ahead!"

The Pope's full message to the conference was read by Cardinal Francis X. Kriengsak Kovithavanij, Archbishop of Bangkok. Pope Francis affirmed charismatic gifts like that of the Focolare spirituality are "co-essential, with the hierarchical gifts, in the mission of the Church". He continued, "the charism of unity is one of these graces for our time, that is experiencing epoch-making change and which calls for a spiritual and pastoral reform, simple and radical, to bring the Church back to the ever-new and ever-relevant Gospel of Jesus".

Pope Francis went on to encourage the Bishops present to live the cardinal points of Chiara Lubich's spirituality: commitment to unity, preferential choice



of the crucified Jesus as their existential compass, making yourself one “starting with the last, the excluded, the cast aside, in order to bring them light, joy, peace”, openness “to a dialogue of charity and truth with every person, whatever their culture, religious tradition or idealistic conviction, in order to build the new civilization of love in this encounter”, to listen like Mary from whom “we learn that what has value and remains is love” and who teaches us how to bring Christ to the world today, Christ “who is risen and lives in the midst of those who are one in his name”.

Maria Voce, President of the Focolare Movement, sent a video message in which she underlined the fact that this spirituality aims to be, as proposed by the conference title, *“at the service of the Church and humanity”*. In an era in which “the Church is facing challenges in all parts of the world, we are called to a new inculturation of the Gospel of Jesus,” affirmed the Focolare President. “An inculturation which gives value to the past but knows how to express it anew, prophetically, in our times. For this reason we must also open up and discover the power for renewal inherent in many of the new charisms present in the Church today.”

Maria Voce continued, “the reality of Bishops, friends of the Focolare Movement” – affirmed the Focolare President – wants to promote “a lifestyle of fellowship and communion with Jesus in the midst among Catholic bishops from all over the world – and then also among bishops of various Churches. Such a lifestyle contributes to making collegiality ever more effective and affective”.

The program continued with an afternoon visit to the “Chiara Lubich city world” exhibition in the Galleria Bianca of Piedicastello, in Trento. The bishops then attended a performance of “From the Tridentine Council to Tridentine Chiara”, a special artistic event

at the church of Santa Maria Maggiore. From there, the bishops proceeded to Cadine Mariapolis Center for the celebration of Mass, presided by the Archbishop of Trento, Mons. Lauro Tisi.

On Sunday 9 February they were welcomed by the Archbishop of Trento to the city’s Cathedral to celebrate the 10am Mass, presided by Cardinal Francis Xavier Kriengsak Kovithavanij. This was streamed live on TV2000 and via the website www.centenariolubichtrento.it. It was followed by an official reception hosted by the Presidents of the Provincial Council Walter Kaswalder, of the Provincial Administration Maurizio Fugatti, and the Mayor of Trento Alessandro Andreatta.

From 10-12 February, the conference moved to Loppiano, near Florence, Italy, the little town of the Focolare Movement. In collaboration with the “Evangelii Gaudium Center” of Sophia University Institute based in Loppiano, there were sessions on a range of current issues facing the Church and society today, involving reports, panel discussions and dialogue. Topics included: “The Church and its currrent challenges” with historian and founder of the Sant’Egidio community Andrea Riccardi, “The Church becomes dialogue” focussing on the four dimensions of the life of the Church (kerygma, communion, dialogue e prophecy). With Cardinals and Bishops from so many different parts of the world, the input was wide-ranging and dynamic.

Anna Lisa Innocenti



Message of Pope Francis

Message of Pope Francis to the participants of the conference "A Charism at the service of the Church and humanity" attended by 7 Cardinals and 137 Bishops, friends of the Focolare, from 50 countries.

Dear brothers!

I warmly welcome the celebration of the international conference which brings you together, first in Trent and then in Loppiano, on the occasion of the centenary of the birth of the Servant of God Chiara Lubich, with the aim of deepening the meaning and contribution of the charism of Unity, at the service today of the mission of the Church as an evangelizing communion.

Charisms are “gifts of the Spirit integrated into the body of the Church, drawn to the centre which is Christ and then channelled into an evangelizing impulse.” (Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium*, 130). It is therefore good, even for Bishops, always to go back to the school of the Holy Spirit, who brings them out of the Upper Room - where the Lord Jesus united them in unity with Peter and with Mary, Mother of God and Mother of the Church - to walk in the fire of Pentecost with all the People of God along the paths of mission. His light and strength lead us to meet, with mercy and tenderness, those who live and suffer in existential and social peripheries, proclaiming and witnessing with joy, and without fear, filled only with faith, hope and love, to the Gospel of Jesus.

Charismatic gifts are co-essential, together with hierarchical gifts, in the mission of the Church¹, and Pastors are invested with the specific gift of recognizing and promoting the action of the Holy Spirit who disseminates within the People of God, among the faithful of every vocation, “special graces with which he makes them suitable and ready to take on various tasks and offices useful for the renewal and greater expansion of the Church” (*Lumen Gentium*, 12). The charism of unity is one of these graces for our time, which is experiencing a change of epoch and calls for a simple, radical, spiritual and pastoral reform that brings the Church back to the ever new and relevant source that is the Gospel of Jesus.

Through the charism of unity, fully attuned to the magisterium of the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, the Holy Spirit concretely teaches how to live the grace of unity according to the prayer addressed by Jesus to the Father just before his Passover of death and resurrection (cf. Jn 17:21). The Spirit invites us to choose Jesus Crucified - Chiara Lubich would add “forsaken” (cf. Mk 15,34; Mt 27,46) - as the only one we wish to follow and as the only compass of our ministry, becoming one with everyone, starting from the least, from the excluded, from the discarded, to bring them light, joy and peace. The Spirit opens us up to a dialogue of charity and truth with every man and every woman, of all cultures, religious traditions, and ideal convictions, to build up, in meeting with them, the new civilization of love. The Spirit brings us to the school of Mary, where we learn that what matters and what remains is love. Like Mary and with her we are called to make present, and almost tangible, for today’s humanity, Jesus, the Son of God who in her womb became the firstborn among many brothers and sisters (cf. Rom 8:29) and who lives Risen among those who are one in his Name (cf. Mt 18:20).

With you, therefore, dear brother Bishops, I express gratitude to God for the gift of the charism of unity through the testimony and the teaching of the Servant of God Chiara Lubich and, with renewed fellowship and under the maternal gaze of Mary, “I (...) invoke the Holy Spirit. I implore him to come and renew the Church, to stir and impel her to go forth boldly to evangelize all peoples”, (Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium*, 261).

I bless each of you and the communities entrusted to you, and I ask you please to pray for me.

Francesco

Rome, St John Lateran, 29th January 2020

¹ Cf The Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, the Letter *Iuvencit Ecclesia* on the relationship between hierarchical and charismatic gifts for the life and mission of the Church, May 15th, 2016.



Video message from **Maria Voce**

Cadine (Trent), February 8th, 2020

Video message from Maria Voce

To the Cardinals and Bishops, friends of the Focolare Movement, Attending the Conference “A charism at the service of the Church and of humanity”

Your Eminences and Excellencies, Cardinals and Bishops, It is a joy for me to greet you at the beginning of this conference organized in the context of the centenary celebrations of the birth of Chiara Lubich, founder of the Focolare Movement.

Your meeting is a particularly grace-filled occasion among the many events that will celebrate this anniversary. However, this year we do not want just to remember Chiara Lubich with nostalgia, but rather to meet her today. We have therefore chosen a motto: “Celebrate to meet”.

Yes, because we are convinced that Chiara, for whom the diocesan phase of the cause of her beatification and canonization has just ended, lives on. She is living in the spirit she gave us, in the Movement she left and in her countless followers scattered throughout the world. They continue to dedicate themselves every day for a more united and peaceful world. They do so in economic, political and cultural initiatives and in movements inspired by her spirituality, such as the Economy of Communion, the Movement for Politics and Policies for Unity and in hundreds of social, environmental and humanitarian projects that

contribute to a more fraternal and just world.

The Focolare Movement was born from a charism and wants to be at the service of the Church and of humanity. The Pope often reminds us that ours is not simply an era of change, but a change of era. We know that there are challenges for the Church all over the world; yet what may seem like the decline of Christianity in so many of our lands can be transformed into a new Advent. We are called to a new inculcation of the Gospel of Jesus, which treasures the experience of the past but knows how to express it anew, prophetically, in our times. For this reason we must also open up and discover the power for renewal inherent in many of the new charisms present in the Church today.

A few months ago, during the annual Conference of the General Secretaries of the Episcopal Conferences of Europe, I had the opportunity to say that “Just as, after the Council of Trent, charisms made a decisive contribution to the reformation of the Church and a new missionary drive and effectiveness in society, today too – it seems to me – we should expect a decisive contribution from the charisms, also in these times that call on us to implement the Second Vatican Council ever more fully.”

Chiara shared with us her charism of unity, fraternity and fellowship, which she lived in the first place. She did so in her many journeys around the world in which she met people different in culture, religion, sex, ethnicity and age, without being stopped by any differences.

¹ Chiara Lubich, “Jesus among us”, Rolle (CH), 5 August 2004.



A central point of her charism is undoubtedly the presence of Jesus in the midst, as promised in the Gospel: “For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them” (Mt 18:20). Our faith teaches us that the risen Jesus is always present, but his presence can be felt more or less strongly, and this depends on mutual love.

In a talk given to some bishop friends of the Movement in Rocca di Papa on 10th February 1984, Chiara explained: *Persons who in other spiritualities seek God within themselves are like persons who in a garden filled with many flowers, look and admire just one flower: they admire, love and adore God present within themselves. It seems to us that God asks us to look at many flowers, because the Lord is present also in other persons, at least potentially so. And just as I must love God present in me - when I am alone - so must I love Him in my brother or sister when he or she is beside me. Thus, I will not want to flee from the world, but to seek Christ in the world: I will not seek only solitude and silence, but also companionship and conversation. And when love towards Christ in one's neighbour is reciprocal, in this encounter we live according to the model of the Trinity, where the two people are like the Father and the Son and among them springs forth the Holy Spirit, soul of the Mystical Body, with His gifts. ... When we meet in this way, the words of Christ come true: “Where two or three are united in my name, I am there in their midst.” The Risen Lord is present.*

End quote.

But in 2004 Chiara added: *Living consciously with Jesus in the midst is a spirituality of the Church which makes us be Church. In fact, ‘Jesus in the midst’ is constitutive of the Church and does not represent only some aspect of Christian life such as poverty, prayer, study or love for the marginalized ... Living with Jesus in the midst means enlivening the Church herself in her identity and vocation.*” End quote.

Throughout her life Chiara always promoted a spirituality of communion centred on this presence.

Among many others who welcomed Chiara’s desire to promote the presence of Jesus in the midst of people, one was certainly Bishop Klaus Hemmerle, who died in 1993. He was a professor of philosophy and theology, a man of great learning and later became bishop of Aachen in Germany. Bishop Hemmerle knew how to live in dialogue with everyone and it was he, encouraged by Chiara Lubich, who brought ahead the lifestyle of fellowship and communion

with Jesus in the midst among Catholic bishops from all over the world - and then also among bishops of various Churches. Such a lifestyle contributes to making collegiality ever more effective and affective. Hence the reality of the bishop friends of the Focolare Movement began.

I am glad that there is time in your programme to learn more about his ideas on this.

You will also have the opportunity to visit the city of Trent and the exhibition “Chiara Lubich - city world” which portrays significant moments in the life, thought and work of our founder. It is important, as the letter to the Hebrews says, “to recall those earlier days” (Heb 10:32-36), that is, those first days in which the Movement began in Trent and then spread all over the world.

You will then also go to Loppiano, where you will find a little town, a fruit of Chiara Lubich’s charism, with various concrete developments at the service of the Church and humanity.

When he visited the little town in May 2018, Pope Francis exclaimed: “In Loppiano everyone feels at home!” I hope you can really feel “at home” both while you are in Trent and then in Loppiano. On that same occasion the Pope also told us: “*You are at the start*”. And we really feel this! We are at the start.

Chiara was farsighted: she spoke of a united world as if it were already a reality! Now it’s up to us, step by step, with humility but decisively, to achieve this ideal. I believe that her charism still has much to say to the world and the centenary can be the time when we rediscover it together.

I hope that these few days will bring you a profound encounter with Chiara, allowing you to discover the treasures of a charism given by the Holy Spirit for our times, and that they will be days of light, of fraternal communion and great joy!

Now your programme will continue with the new short video on Chiara, made recently with youthful energy. It is my gift to you.

With best wishes.



An ***overture*** that opens to the future

The international conference entitled "A Charism at the Service of the Church and Humanity" showed interesting perspectives for the Church. The participants, 7 Cardinals and 137 Bishops, friends of the Focolare Movement from 50 countries, gathered first at Trento and then at Loppiano.

It was a symbolic and solemn scene on the sanctuary of the Theotokós of Loppiano, that is, in a church dedicated to Mary, Mother of God. Surrounded by the inhabitants of this little town of the Focolare Movement who represented the people of God, a large assembly of Cardinals and Bishops declared to each other that they lived fraternal love according to the commandment of Jesus, ready to share each other's joys and sorrows, to love the community of the other as their own, in short, to love each other to the point of giving their lives for one another. This solemn "pact", formulated on Tuesday, February 11th, was the culmination of an international conference entitled "A Charism at the Service of the Church and Humanity" which gathered 7 Cardinals and 137 Bishops, friends of the Focolare Movement, representing 50 countries, first at Trento and then at Loppiano.

Never before has participation in this annual conference been so numerous, due also to the fact that the meeting took place in the year of the Centenary of Chiara Lubich's birth. The programme reflected the motto chosen for the Centenary: "Celebrate to meet". The first part of the conference, which took place in

Trento, the birthplace of the founder of the Focolare Movement, was in fact dedicated primarily to the celebration of this event: the visit to the exhibition "Chiara Lubich City World" at the Galleries of Trento; the greeting of the authorities at the headquarters of the Autonomous Province of Trento; the Eucharistic celebration in the Cathedral of the city and the artistic re-enactment "From the Tridentine Council to Tridentine Chiara" held in the church of Santa Maria Maggiore, where the Council was held and in which Chiara Lubich received her baptism.



Celebratory moments that were not characterized by the simple nostalgic memory of a historical figure, but opened our eyes to the relevance of Chiara's charism, such as its global, ecclesial and ecumenical dimension. This was strongly underlined by a long

message from Pope Francis, who warmly welcomed this conference expressing “gratitude to God for the gift of the charism of unity through the witness and teaching (...) of Chiara Lubich”.

The Pope’s invitation to the Bishops, to “always put themselves back in the school of the Holy Spirit” and to live the main points of Chiara Lubich’s spirituality, was achieved in the second part of the programme held in the International Focolare Little Town in Loppiano near Florence. The context of a small community of 800 inhabitants, who see in Jesus’ commandment of mutual love the law of their living together, stimulated the prelates to do the same. The scenes of communion and sharing were moving, beginning with the small things: mutual help, deep listening, attentive reception of the requests, needs and ideas of each one. True “ministers” at the service of one another.

Against the background of a profound and rich analysis of the historical context in which Chiara Lubich lived and worked, presented by Andrea Riccardi of the Sant’Egidio Community, the ecclesial dimensions that flow from Chiara’s charism were deepened: a Church

that becomes dialogue; the ‘mysticism of us’ that is achieved in a Church-communion; the ecumenical dimension; the different formation paths offered by the Focolare Movement to deepen and spread these dimensions. The lived experiences of Bishops from all over the world illustrated the possibility of achieving this in their personal life and in their service to the Church.

“It was not a matter of looking back,” an African bishop emphasised at the conclusion of the conference, “but an overture, that is, a beginning and an opening to the future. The “pact” that the Bishops made in Loppiano, in the Church of the Mother of God, had been signed, in the very same place, by Pope Francis together with the inhabitants of the Little Town during his visit to Loppiano. It is a pact, signed with the support of the People of God who implement it and continually draw strength from it, which can also be for the Bishops a beginning, a starting point, an overture which makes one glimpse the playing of new notes on the path of dialogue, of new harmonies on the path of communion of the Church of the future.

Joachim Schwind – Anna Lisa Innocenti

Living the Gospel: Business temptation

We found ourselves in great need of a huge sum of money to cover a certain debt. That morning a client came by, aiming to buy six machines. After our business was done, he proposed that we glue a famous brand sticker on the product. Taken by surprise, although we knew that this was common practice in our market, we were caught between a rock and a hard place: we risked losing that huge deal, but I didn’t feel like we should accept the offer. After talking to my husband about it, we understood clearly that we could not give in and betray our conscience as Christians. The client looked at us, surprised. When he asked if we were Catholic, we said yes. His face relaxed. “Today I learned what it means to be loyal to one’s faith. Don’t worry, I’ll still buy from you. You have taught me something really important. I was Christian too, but seeing how everyone else does in business, I let myself be taken by temptation. From now on, I’ll never do it again.” (G. A., Nigeria)



*edited by Stefania Tanesini
(taken from *Il Vangelo del Giorno*,
Città Nuova, anno VI, n.1, gennaio-febbraio 2020)*

Dancing for Peace in the Holy Land

An ongoing collaboration between young performers from Montecatini (Florence) and Bethlehem.

In places torn apart by armed conflict propelled by economic and military pressures, the peoples afflicted can be victims of mutual prejudice as much as everything else. These prejudices foster hostilities among the civil populations, but they can also be dissolved by meeting on “neutral territory”, on a cultural and social, as well as geographic level. There is territory where the human spirit can open up to authentic connections to experience freedom from hatred and fears, and find new approaches to reconciliation. This is the space occupied by the “Harmony among Peoples” project promoted by the Armonia Dancelab Cultural Association, using dance as a meeting place for peace. It is the social outreach of the Laboratorio Accademico Danza, based in Montecatini Terme, near Florence, Italy, founded by its artistic director, Antonella Lombardo. We asked her how the Association came about:

“After teaching dance for 20 years, I realised that young people seem to approach this discipline solely as a means to obtain personal success. I wanted to allow them to experience how dance can give meaning to life, independent of how “successful” or not their careers may be, how dance can contribute to improving other people’s lives and can actually sow seeds of peace. This desire led to the idea of international “campus” events first at Montecatini, then in Bethlehem in the Holy Land”.

Tell us how it happened.

“We began by inviting young dance students from different parts of the world to stay with us in Italy, in order to share with them a vision of art which embraces the capacity to unite people from different social, political, ethnic and religious backgrounds, because it speaks a universal language. Inviting Palestinian and Israeli youngsters, we came into contact with the Custodia Terrae Sanctae and the John Paul II Foundation, who six years ago invited us to Bethlehem and Jerusalem to run an ‘arts campus’ for children living in refugee camps in the Palestinian territories”.

What happens in a “campus”?

“In our campus the young people have to work hard! They start at 9:00 in the morning right through to 18:00 in the evening, experiencing various styles of dance.



Sharing a house together with the Italian students, they prepare the evening meals together and enjoy celebrating together. They all work on a choreography called Peace Dance which shows how, for example, Israeli and Palestinian youth, who live in a daily context of conflict, are able to create a climate of harmony in their personal relationships and onstage. This is true for participants from all countries, who bring their own artistic sensitivities and culture to the campus”.

How was your experience in Bethlehem?

“When we arrived, we found children with almost no knowledge of art. Some of them had never even seen a felt-tipped pen before. Our two week campus represented for them – prisoners in the open air – a space of freedom, a way to travel in their minds beyond the terrible wall separating them from the Israelis. Our teachers are Palestinian and Israeli young people who have attended our campus in Italy. The experience of the past six years has proved so fruitful that the Custodia Terrae Sanctae has asked us to open a permanent school in Bethlehem, which we hope will be possible next year”.

When is the next Italian campus and how can someone take part?

“It will take place in Montecatini from 27 August to 5 September 2020. Young people will attend from different parts of the world, including Jordan, Egypt, Palestine and Israel. It’s designed for young people who are hoping to become professional artists and who share the idea

that art can be a universal instrument of harmony among peoples. In that way, we hope each one of them can promote this change of mentality wherever they go on to work, in theatres, schools, art centres etc. Those interested can contact info@dancelab.it."

These campus events are part of a broader project, the Festival of Harmony among Peoples, promoted by the Association...

"The Festival has been running for 15 years. This year it takes place in Tuscany, supported by the entire Val di Nievole region and cities including Florence, Assisi and Palermo. It involves a series of linked events, launching on 14 March in the imposing "Salone dei 500" in Florence's famous Palazzo Vecchio. The date marks the anniversary of the death of Focolare foundress Chiara Lubich and the program will acknowledge her contribution to bringing harmony in the world. It also commemorates 20 years since she was awarded honorary citizenship of Florence, and the 100th anniversary of her birth."

Other forthcoming events?

"Throughout the year we're running programs in schools to develop a piece of work on the theme of disarmament. Our hope is to enable the voice of young people to reach the heads of state of countries involved in the production and trade of arms, to try to put a dent in them. Another program which is proving very popular with youth uses music as a moment of reflection the theme of 'encounter'. Other cultural gatherings and inter-cultural meals are planned for Montecatini and Palermo."

The Festival and the campus are all offered free to participants. This is surely a big challenge...

"From the start I wanted to keep this experience distinct from the usual dance programs delivered by schools for profit. The children come to us not only to study dance but because they have chosen to live for peace and to be bridge-builders of peace.

Claudia Di Lorenzi

Living the Gospel: Refugees

We lost everything in the Rwandan war: our home and several relations. From Kigali we moved back to my native town but later had to leave there and go to a refugee camp. We took just a few things with us, including clothes for the baby I was expecting. There were thousands of desperate, destitute people in the camp. After a number of nuns arrived in the camp, I volunteered to help with first aid. I was entrusted with providing social care but we had no money, nothing to give to the refugees.

Among a group of orphans there was a seven-year-old boy who was separated from his family. His mother eventually found him after many days' walk but was totally exhausted when she arrived at the camp. All I had was 300 francs, the equivalent of about a dollar: it was a fortune. I really needed it myself but she needed it more than me. I gave it to her convinced that God would think of my family too. With the money she was able to buy food and a small hut. Shortly afterwards, I met my elder sister, who had spent three days looking for us in the camp: she brought me 1,000 francs.
(C.E. – Rwanda)



*edited by Stefania Tanesini
(taken from Il Vangelo del Giorno,
Città Nuova, anno VI, n.1, gennaio-febbraio 2020)*

Working **together** for the good of humanity

A partnership agreement signed between FAO (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations) and New Humanity, the international NGO of the Focolare Movement. Objective: to continue to work together to defeat world hunger by 2030.

This agreement strengthens the collaboration that has already begun: it is a document that confirms our common commitment to eradicate hunger and poverty from our planet. This is the meaning of the partnership agreement signed on December 19 in Rome between the FAO, the largest UN agency dealing with food and agriculture, and New Humanity, the international NGO of the Focolare Movement. The aim of the agreement is to promote, especially among younger generations, actions, activities and initiatives to implement the Zero Hunger project, according to the objectives of the UN Agenda 2030 for sustainable development.

"Thank you for the work you have already done with us as New Humanity, for your collaboration in working towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), for Zero Hunger and for the future of the planet and the world." With these words Dr. Yasmina Bouziane, Director of FAO's Office for Institutional Communication, welcomed Dr. Marco Desalvo, President of the New Humanity NGO, together with a small delegation of young people from the Focolare Movement, to the FAO headquarters in Rome. *"We know we have only 10 more years to achieve these goals. What you do with young people from all walks of life is extremely important because young people are innovators, they bring about change and they want facts. Without facts – without information – we cannot achieve the concrete actions we want."* *"What we are signing today,"* he added, *"is another recognition that it is only in partnership that we can move forward. We already greatly appreciate what the Focolare Movement and New Humanity have done through their own initiatives, so together, I think we can certainly go ahead and truly support the countries and the entire planet to achieve the Agenda 2030 Goals".*

"Thank you. This means a lot to us too", said Marco Desalvo talking about the agreement. *"There are thousands of young people already working for the Zero Hunger project but this is also a new commitment for us. Yesterday I was reflecting on the fact that Chiara Lubich, the founder of the Focolare Movement, started out by going to help the people who were hungry in Trent and thought that this was the way to solve the social problem*



of the city. Now we are spread all over the world and we want to continue and reach the goal".

The collaboration between FAO and New Humanity started some time ago. In response to FAO's invitation to young people to support and commit to Zero Hunger, many initiatives have begun.

A group made up of young people from 11 countries has drawn up the Youth4Unity for Zero Hunger *"Charter of Commitment"*. Every year in May, the *"United World Week"* and the *"Run4Unity"* world relay race are also dedicated to raising awareness and taking action on the Zero Hunger front. The bimonthly magazine *"Teens"* has a column dedicated to these Zero Hunger issues. In June 2018, 630 young girls (from 9 to 14 years old) of the Focolare Movement were welcomed in the FAO headquarters in Rome. As a result of their commitment to this Zero Hunger goal, each girl was given a passport and they became *"the first Zero Hunger citizens"*. Recently a book for young people aged 12 – 14 years has been produced thanks to the joint efforts of the FAO and New Humanity. It is entitled *"Generation #ZeroHunger. Young people on the way to a world without hunger"*. Using experiences and examples drawn from real life, the book proposes a new way of living that can contribute to a united world and, therefore, to overcoming hunger and poverty. A copy was given to Dr. Bouziane who said, *"I will cherish this book, thank you!"*

She went on to say that young people must evaluate together what are their priorities and to what will they show commitment. The young people present explained that these priorities will also be discussed at the next international formation meetings for the new generations in Trent at the beginning of 2020 and at the Youth4Unity workshops in Kenya and Ivory Coast. *"Our commitment"* -concluded Dr. Bouziane, *"is to work with you on your priorities in order to reach Zero Hunger, because our priority is to reach Zero Hunger together with you."*

Stefania Tanesini

Burkina Faso: On a mission in “the land of upright people”

The relationship built with Focolare members and communities worldwide is one of the most beautiful experiences for us who work at focolare.org. We take the opportunity of this Christmas Season to thank all those who send us news, and thus allow the life of the charism of unity to inspire many.

An email we received from Fr. Domenico De Martino, a 36 year old priest from Naples, who is a missionary in Burkina Faso, has really been a great gift. It has brought us closer to people who live in a part of the world where peace, dignity and religious freedom are seriously threatened and where the use of telecommunications is extremely low.

Violence by extremist groups, that hit Burkina Faso during the past five years, caused hundreds of deaths, a wave of kidnappings and the closure of many schools and churches. It has also led to a massive and continuous displacement of people who moved from the affected regions to the capital and other large urban centres. According to the latest information by the UN, 486,360 internally displaced persons (IDPs) were registered at the beginning of October, more than twice the number displaced in July. Numbers continue to grow steadily, and there are even reports of one million IDPs.

Fr. Domenico, a member of the Missionary Community of Villaregia, came to know the Focolare Movement at the age of 12, when he came across the Word of Life, a monthly commentary on the Scriptures in the spirit of the charism of unity. Chiara Lubich started this commentary more than 40 years ago, and Domenico came to know about it during his visits to the missionaries. He related: “When I was 17 years old, I wrote to Chiara Lubich and asked her for a Word from the Gospel that could be a light to guide me in my life. I also wanted to share with her all about my vocation. I still treasure her answer to my letter; I keep it in my Bible and every now and then I read it again. She indicated words from St John’s Gospel: ‘If anyone loves me, he will keep my word and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our abode with him’ (Jn 14:23). I always try to go deeper into these very strong and demanding words, to find the meaning of my life. I was ordained priest in 2012 after a year’s experience in Lima, Peru”.

For the last two years, Fr. Domenico has been doing missionary work in Ouagadougou, the capital of



Burkina Faso. He is involved in a number of projects that aim at integral human promotion. He told us: “Burkina Faso literally means ‘the land of upright people’; family and a sense of community are among the most treasured values of the Burkinabé people. Most of the 160 students, who attend the school we have started to promote literacy, are girls and young mothers who had no opportunity to study before. We have also set up a project to help women start small businesses to make ends meet. Many present their projects to ask for our support but it is not always easy to choose. The Gospel and the desire to be part of this people guide us in our choices.

In recent months, schools in the capital city have started to function again, but unfortunately, it is not the same for schools in other parts of the country. Terrorist groups burnt many schools in the North, North-East and North-West of the country, and at the end of the last scholastic year several teachers were killed. “The tactics used by the bandits or terrorists are always the same; they arrive in the villages, take everything - cattle and crops - empty the small shops, and then they look for teachers and tell them that if they don’t leave, they will be the next victims unless they teach Arabic or what they call ‘the true religion’. I had the opportunity to talk to some teachers, who despite this desperate situation still have to report to work because the state obliges them to do so, but there is great fear. Our area is quiet, but we try to be close to our people and share in their fears and anxieties. Last September, 40 soldiers lost their lives during an attack on a military base. Among them, there were 3

of our young parishioners. We were particularly close to one of them, who was the eldest son of a family we know quite well. When we went to visit this family to offer our condolences, we met the grief-stricken widow and her two sons, and it was extremely difficult to understand why so much hatred and horror. Jean, the soldier's father, who always tells me: 'You priests are God's sign for us; we can ask you everything because you give us God's word, his comfort and his will', was also there. This time, I could only shake his weak hand without uttering a word, and make him feel that God is near".

In this serious situation of great instability, one perceives a sign of hope in the communion that continues to grow among different Christian churches and people of other religions, especially Muslims. They get together and unite in prayers for peace. Fr. Domenico spoke about another sign of peace when he related about a project to help with the payment of school fees. To date, 96 children have benefited from

it. "We were shocked when we found out that many children do not have a birth certificate; it seems as if they do not exist at all. We encounter various complex situations that require our attention and assistance. It is amazing to discover that placing God at the centre of our activities leads us to deeper understanding and better organization, because we look at the person as a whole. We are trying to get organized about birth certificates, and this will allow us to give back dignity to the children of our neighbourhoods".

It was evident that Fr. Domenico had so many other things to relate. His words full of love for the Burkinabé people brought us closer to this country. He concluded: "Communion helps us to be Church in the real sense of the word; we actually know what is happening around us and we become fully committed to help all God's children who suffer and are in need".

Stefania Tanesini

Living the Gospel: Growing as parents

We had noticed that our son was changing and behaving in a different way. One day, I very delicately asked him if anything was wrong. He confided in me that he was using drugs. I told my husband and neither of us slept a wink that night. We felt helpless and thought we had failed as parents. Joao sometimes brought friends home and their behaviour made us suffer too. My husband and I realised that we had to make a choice and we decided to love and serve those boys. To support our son, we cancelled our holiday so that he would not be alone. At the same time, the certainty that love would win began to grow in us. One day Joao told us that he wanted to continue living in our family home and asked if we could help his friends too. A new life began. Although we had no formation or training other than living the Gospel, we founded a support group in our city for the families of drug addicts. It is called Families Anonymous. This group has helped many young people recover from drug addiction.(O.P. – Portugal)



*edited by Stefania Tanesini
(taken from *Il Vangelo del Giorno*,
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Care for victims is the priority in **Albania**, in the aftermath of the earthquake.

The Focolare Movement is helping many who have suffered loss and damage: "The life and needs of the person is at the center of our efforts. Listening, welcoming, sharing is what engages us at this time. But a great effort will be needed to plan the reconstruction".

Solidarity continues with the victims of the earthquake that struck Albania on November 26th , 2019, resulting in 52 deaths, over 2,000 injured and considerable damage to structures. Almost two months since the earthquake, fundraising initiatives, commemorative events and aid interventions in the territory are engaging institutions, ecclesial and welfare realities. Once the emergency was over, all efforts are now directed to promoting the coordination of those working on the ground to plan and start the reconstruction. In the midst of current uncertainty, great comfort comes from feeling part of a family an extended network of people that ensures support and proximity. This is what lies at the heart of the Focolare's active commitment. We heard from Fabio Fiorelli, a focolarino who lives and works in one of the centers of Tirana.

Since the night of the earthquake, what initiatives has the Movement been able to carry out in support of the people affected?

"Some of us have linked up with the national and diocesan Caritas by collaborating to prepare clothes and blankets for those who are homeless, and by going to the temporary shelters to listen to the people and play with the children. At the suggestion of the families belonging to the Movement, on December 21st we prepared an afternoon of Christmas celebration for the youngest children - and others -

with songs, games, a 'living' crib and gifts from Santa Claus: a moment of serenity and communion so as to move forward. In addition, in Durazzo, a psychologist from the Movement, whose own house was damaged, collaborates with a team that reaches outlying villages that were very affected by the earthquake, where people live in tents and lack primary necessities. On a very practical level, a list has been compiled of the families of the Movement whose homes have been seriously damaged, our engineers have carried out inspections and cost analyses for repairs.

What other activities are you planning?

"A "project" has been drawn up with objectives and strategies to be undertaken in synergy with the United World Association (AMU), which is part of the Movement, and we are waiting for it to be implemented.

Immediately after the earthquake, during the emergency phase, Marcella Ioele, responsible for one of the Focolare centres in Tirana, together with others, reached Durazzo and the surrounding areas to give out help ,working with Caritas and the local Church and to give support to the victims. We asked her what experiences moved her , and the others with her, as they talked with displaced people:

"A young woman told me that when the tremors began, her brother, who was at home with the family, instinctively ran away to get out of the building, but immediately came back to take care of them. This gesture helped her to understand that in these moments she must not think only of herself but of those close to her. Another girl wanted to take action to help those in trouble, but having to assist her elderly mother she couldn't leave. But - she

told us - she could listen to and comfort the many who passed by, and she was happy because she felt she was giving her contribution in this way".

How do people feel today?

"On the one hand people have to take responsibility for what collapsed , having authorized the construction of unsafe buildings and it is also clear that there is a lack of preparation for managing emergency situations. On the other hand, the solidarity shown in the initial phase by other countries raises the hope that a better Albania can start again from here. To see peoples working

together , who until yesterday were separated by ancient hatreds, was a sign of hope. There is great gratitude especially towards the people of Kosovo came forward in a very significant way, almost as if they wanted to reciprocate the love they had received when they were here during the emergency in Kosovo. Some of them came to take families to their homes. The earthquake," a young man told me, "brought us closer together than ever before. Others told us they could see the presence of God even in this reality of pain".

Claudia Di Lorenzi

A TV movie about Chiara Lubich for RAI, Italian television.

Directed by Giacomo Campiotti, shooting will begin next spring and will take place in Rome and in Trento, her hometown.

"The strength of a someone like Chiara today is to make us look at the other person as a possibility, a gift, a bearer of a seed of truth to be valued and loved, however distant the other person may be. Universal fraternity as a premise for dialogue and peace". We read in the press release in which Luca Barbareschi, producer for Eliseo Fiction, and Rai Fiction say they are "proud" to announce that a TV movie about Chiara Lubich will be made for Italian television. Directed by Giacomo Campiotti, shooting will start next spring and will take place in Rome and in Trento, her hometown.

The press release goes on to explain that "Chiara is very young when, in the years of the Second World War, she feels called to build a better world, a more united world. From that time on she set herself the goal of building bridges between people , whatever their race, nation or religious faith. The strength of a someone like Chiara today is to make us look at the other person as a possibility, a gift, a bearer of a seed of truth to be valued and loved, however distant the other person may be. Universal fraternity as a premise for dialogue and peace. Chiara's message does not belong only to the Catholic world, she has contributed to raising the profile of women and their role even , and above all , outside the ecclesiastical institution.

By the editorial staff of focolare.org

Hope rising from the ashes

For thousands of people, although the emergency is not over, life is slowly returning to normal after the eruption of the Taal volcano in the Philippines on January 12th 2020, which caused serious damage to the surrounding areas.

According to the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (PHIVOLCS), the alert level 4 has been lowered to level 3 and the danger zone has been reduced from 14 to 7 km from the crater. The Focolare community is using all possible means to provide for the needs of those displaced by the disaster: more than 300,000 people were forced to evacuate.

Purisa Plaras, focolarina and co-director of "Mariapolis Pace", the Focolare's little town in Tagaytay, says: "A few days after the eruption of the Taal volcano, we returned to Tagaytay to check on the situation of our community and share everything with the different families living around our Centre, which is located within the danger zone, within 14 kilometres of the volcano. Concerned about their basic needs, we distributed food and water to the families.

One of our young Focolare members shares: "It is not easy to deal with this situation. It is heartbreaking and I couldn't help crying. I cannot explain how I feel right now, but deep down I know that God loves us immensely, embracing together the face of Jesus Crucified and Abandoned in this situation. I will be strong here, to serve Jesus also in others".

Randy Debarbo, the focolarino responsible for the territory around Mariapolis Pace, says: "On Sunday, January 12th , as we were returning home from a meeting, we noticed the bad smell of sulphur in the air. It started raining but there was something strange. The rainwater was staining our umbrellas and clothes. Then we realized it was volcanic ash mixed with rain coming down like mud! When we woke up the next morning, we no longer recognized what was around us. Everything was grey as if we were colour blind. We saw the massive devastation caused by the eruption of the Taal volcano. The public school near the centre of the Focolare became a temporary shelter and transit centre for about 500 people coming from the lakeside villages close to the volcano. Faced with such devastation, a voice inside me spoke aloud: "I was hungry and you gave me to eat..." This concern for Jesus in those who are in need led him to remain



in Tagaytay together with other focolarinis. Randy continued, "Together with the other focolarinis, we travelled by truck for about 20 kilometers from Tagaytay to buy water to distribute to some families who were still in Tagaytay. It was very moving to see the families momentarily relieved of their worries, the children were happy to receive even a bucket of water. With a doctor from Tagaytay, we decided to visit the families around us to try to meet their medical needs. Arriving at one place, the people from that neighborhood were all along the street, waiting and asking for food. Instead of just visiting one home, we were able to offer a free medical checkup to those who were waiting for food. We put together the small amounts of money we had in our pockets and personally bought medicines for those in urgent need of medical care".

In addition to the generous help from the families of the Movement in the Philippines, the Movement around the world is supporting, with prayers and financial contributions , Mariapolis Pace which is at the service of the work of the Focolare Movement in Asia.

Jonas Lardizabal

Paradise, Paradise!

On 5 February 2020, Juan Carlos Duque, a Colombian focolarino died in an accident in the Fiore Centre in Lima, Peru where he lived in the focolare. A few days earlier, in preparation for the priesthood, he had been ordained a deacon during a joyful community celebration. We bring you a letter of farewell written by Gustavo Clariá, who lived with him in the focolare.

Dearest Juan Carlos,

Just as I had done so many other times, I asked you to help me. Even though I had the password, I couldn't get into my e mail account to answer some messages. It was lunch time but, as always, you took on my problem and solved it in your usual speedy way. Lunch was no different from any other day: we talked about some serious matters but there was also a lot of joking and laughter. Your laugh was unmistakable; you were happy when we were altogether.

At the end of the meal, you were the first to stand up and collect the dishes. And then you left in a hurry to go to "your" Fiore Centre. You wanted to adjust the large water tank which had been unused for some time. I, on the other hand, went to rest. After a few minutes, my mobile rang. It was Pacho: "Juan Carlos has had a serious accident ... he made a false move on the roof and fell down ... he died instantly" I couldn't believe what I was hearing. Everything in me was refusing to believe what my ears were hearing. I only managed to say, "My God", "My God", "My God", "My God" ... I don't know how many times I repeated it and I continued to do so, in silence, while Mario and I ran to the nearby Fiore Centre. When we arrived, we couldn't believe what we saw.

That moment, 3.15 pm on 5th February, changed our lives. Nothing was as it had been before before and we had to accept reality. You know, I went to the chapel three times. I was confused and asking for some explanation, "Why has this happened?", "We have given our lives to follow you - and you - whose side are you on...?" Silence. The third time you answered me, "You still have so much to lose." I came out almost feeling humiliated because I realized that I was far away from where you, Juan Carlos, had arrived. We thought that you were preparing for the priesthood... in reality you were preparing for the most important meeting in life.



As the hours went by and we continued to ask "help my unbelief," that tragic fall that we had seen with our own limited vision, was gradually transformed, with the eyes of faith, into a masterful "flight" upwards.

Yes, friend and brother, it wasn't a fall, it was a Flight. You had already told us at your ordination to the diaconate on 25th January. You reminded us of Philip Neri, that wonderful saint from Tuscany who, when he was appointed monsignor, threw his hat in the air, exclaiming, "Paradise, Paradise." He was not interested in the title, only the encounter with God ... And that is where you are now, together with those who have gone before you.

Goodbye, dear Juan Carlos till God wants us to gather again, altogether, never to be parted. We will miss your joy, your laughter, your cooking – arepas and salted chicken - your readiness to help and your concern for each one of us. We will miss your ability to solve problems and to "make life exciting", your transparency and radicalness as a simple focolarino, a friend of Jesus. You remain a beacon of light that accompanies and guides us always

Gustavo E. Clariá

Living the Gospel: With new eyes

My wife and I had come to a crossroads: I only saw her faults and she only saw mine. The arguments had become more intense, and it seemed that anything that happened, even things with the kids, kept feeding this war. One day, as I brought my youngest daughter to school, I heard: "You know Daddy, the religion teacher explained to us that forgiveness is like a pair of eyeglasses that lets us see with new eyes." This phrase from a child left me uneasy. I thought about it all day. In the evening, coming back home, I had the idea to go to the florist and buy as many roses as years we had been married. My wife initially reacted badly (yet another blunder?), but then seeing how happy our children were, especially the youngest, she changed her attitude. That evening, after long silences, something changed. It was the beginning of a new way. It really seemed to



me that I had new eyes, and I saw my wife and our children as I never had before. (J. B., Spain)

Members of the Moviment who have concluded their earthly life:

22 August 2019

Ezio Sorgo, focolarino from Italy

3 October 2019

Francesca Marchetti Crepaldi, married focolarina from Italy

30 December 2019

Maria Giulia Longa, married focolarina from Italy

6 January 2020

Theodore (Ted) Segura, married focolarino from Philippines

12 January 2020

Paola Carluccio Rigo, married focolarina from Roman Mariapolis

23 January 2020

Avelino Teaño, married focolarino from Philippines

5 February 2020

Juan Carlos Duque, Focolarino from Colombia in Peru

13 february 2020

Adriano Vincenzi, priest focolarino from Italy

27 february 2020

Manolo Barreiro, Spanish focolarino in Loppiano

27 february 2020

Jim Webber, married focolarino from USA

Contributions to the Mariapolis newsletter:

Dear Readers, this printable Pdf newsletter contains the most important articles published in the "Mariapolis" section of the Focolare Movement's international website (www.focolare.org/mariapoli).

You can download it from the site or receive it by email by activating the link.

It is a free service from the Communications Office.

We are always grateful to those who wish to continue to support our work financially and in that way contribute to the spreading of the charism of unity.

The editorial staff

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