

The Spirit's breath of life, the Church in today's world

The 37th ecumenical meeting of bishops, friends of the Focolare Movement will take place at Sigtuna, Sweden from 6 to 9 November 2018. It will focus on listening to the voice of the Spirit in a world that faces ecumenical and present-day challenges.

The 40 bishops, who are friends of the Focolari and come from various Christian Churches, have decided to meet in Sweden because of its profound significance in the ecumenical journey.

The meeting will be taking place two years after the Lund event, one that has given a new impetus to ecumenical dialogue. In the joint declaration signed by Pope Francis and Bishop Munib Youman, who was then President of the Lutheran World Federation, one reads: "We pledge to witness together to God's merciful grace, made visible in the crucified and risen Christ. Aware that the way we relate to one another shapes our witness to the Gospel, we commit ourselves to further growth in communion rooted in Baptism, as we seek to remove the remaining obstacles that hinder us from attaining full unity. Christ desires that we be one, so that the world may believe (cf. John 17:21)".

The periodic meetings of these bishops, who also wish to go deeper into the spirituality of unity that stemmed from Chiara Lubich's charism, aim towards a communion that is a witness to the Gospel. They were held in Jerusalem, Constantinople (Istanbul), London, Augsburg, Katowice and other cities of significant importance in the ecumenical journey.

The participants attending this 37th meeting belong to 12 Christian Churches and come from 18 different countries; they will reflect on: "The Spirit's breath of life and today's world". Maria Voce, president of the Focolare Movement will also be present and she will speak about "The Holy Spirit, Soul of the Church in the experience and thought of Chiara Lubich".

Other related themes will range: from the ecumenical challenge in different geographical regions to the meaning of reconciliation in today's culture; from the Church's renewal to synodality. Space will also be dedicated to the joint commemoration of the Reformation (2017) and its meaning for the Churches today.

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