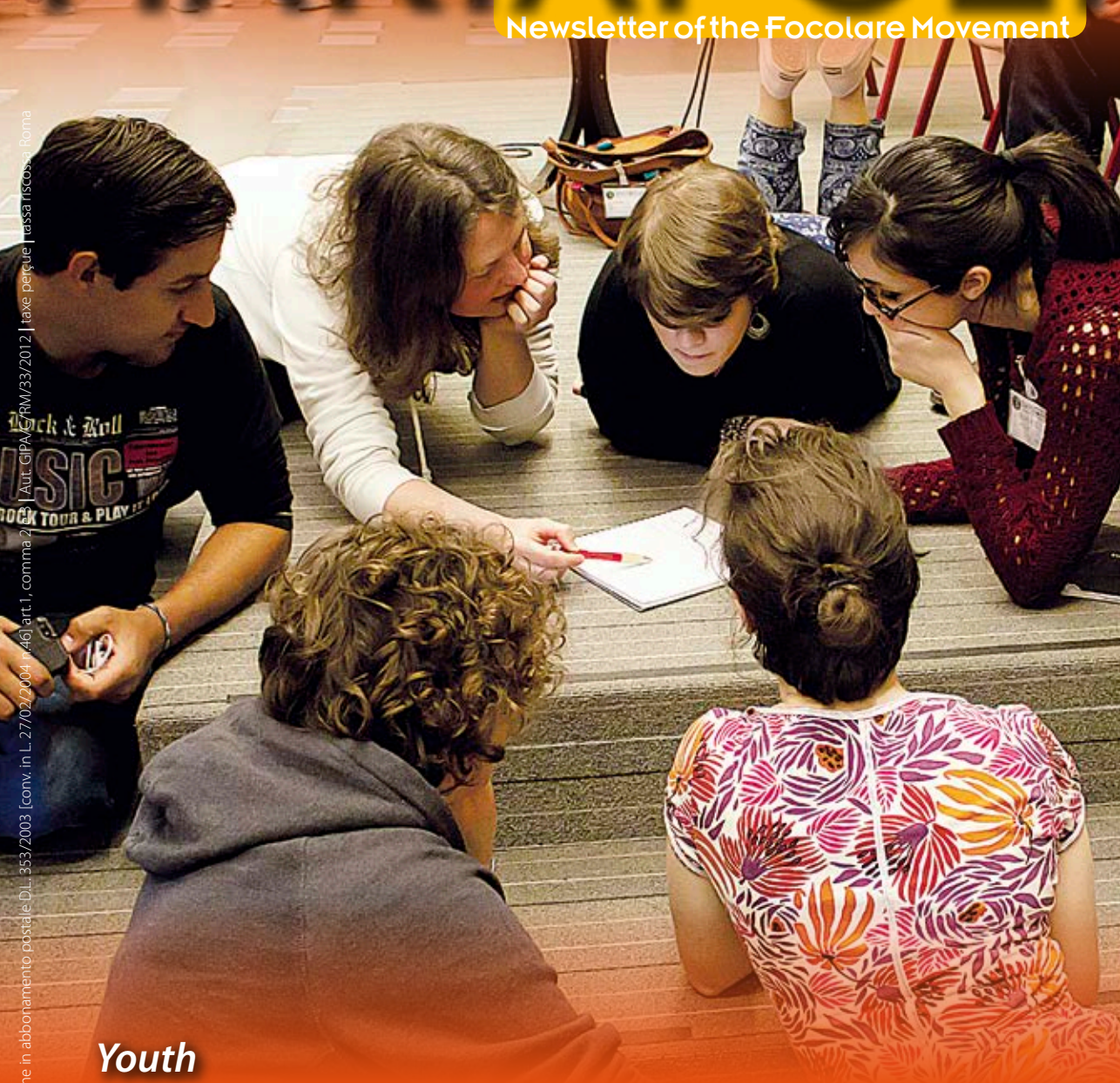


YEAR XXXI N 05 MAY 2014

MARIAPOLI

Newsletter of the Focolare Movement

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Youth

**Working
for a united
world**

Two Pope saints
A commentary
with writings
of Chiara

Little Town Victoria
Looking together
at the «challenges»
of Africa

Sanctity of the people

Dearest,,

I would like to share with all of you my soul today, and to tell you of a thought that I have already shared with someone.

It is regarding our relationship with sanctity.

Mother Teresa of Calcutta, when she wrote to me, often repeated this sentence: «Become a saint because God is a saint».

It was certainly not this great saint who determined a prayer that I have been saying for sometime now. But, without a doubt, with this phrase of hers, it was like adding fire to fire

For years, in fact, for many years, Someone in my heart pushed me to turn to Jesus with these words: «Make me a saint as a gift to Mary».

It seemed to me in fact, that, if I would not be able to reach the goal of sanctity, my service to the Opera would lack something: the possibility of offering not only the care that, with the grace of God, I would have had for it, but also a model, a complete witness of its spirituality.

Now, since the beginning of the Movement, as we know, the search for



San Paolo (Brasile), 30 aprile 1998

sanctity in itself was never understood. It could still express a retreating into oneself.

But to strive for it out of love was something else. This is the reason why: «To make a gift to Mary». And why «to Mary»?

Because she is our mother, our model, our queen, She who guides us. And «to Mary», also simply because we love her.

But recently, fully aware that ours is a collective way and this requires the perfect carrying out of loving the other as oneself, it became clear to me that, in order to become a saint, I would have to wish the same goal for my neighbours just as for myself. Thus, my prayer underwent a transformation: «Jesus, make us saints so as to make a gift to Mary and to be models for many».

This new prayer, shared, here at the Center of our Opera, made many people happy, and together, so as to do our part, we promised to live the formula of the 6 «s» which we already know: «sarò santa se sono santa subito» (I will be a saint if I am a saint immediately).

But at what point is our Movement with regards to sanctity?

It seems that I can say, with the grace of God for having lived the charism of unity, that there should be many small and less small saints in Paradise among our people. We will not hesitate to think that there are dozens and dozens and maybe even more. We have observed, in fact, the way in which many depart from this life and we know that generally, death is a mirror of life.

Nevertheless, in our Movement we have rarely thought about presenting these creatures to the Church, so that, if She thought it opportune, She could take steps to verify it. We are now preparing something for Igino Giordani, our Foco, and for Mons. Klaus Hemmerle. But... that's all.

Rather, it is the Church herself who is starting to take an interest in this through her Ministers, who are thinking of actually introducing a process of can-

onization for three of our young people: one of whom died at a very young age to protect her purity.

But have we, as a Movement, made the right move in not showing an interest for this?

The justification for our apparent omission may be clear today: the Lord did not ask us for an individual sanctity, but a communitarian one, where each one must help his neighbor to become a saint. And these, in a chain-reaction, will help their neighbor and so on.

This is the type of sanctity that will have to be eventually verified and highlighted for the edification of many in the Church: a collective sanctity, a sanctity of the people.

Isn't it marvelous?

May Heaven make this a reality.

In the meantime, let us commit ourselves personally, with the utmost decision, from now on, to live the 6 «s», and let's help each other to do likewise.

May the Holy Spirit, who has shown us such a great predilection, fulfill his work and give life to a populace of saints, also out of love for Mary, his Spouse.

If the formula «sarò santa se sono santa subito» [I will be a saint if I am a saint immediately] is too long, just say: «santo subito», «santa subito», «santi subito» [saint immediately, saints immediately].

From the Collegamento CH, Mollens, 27 august 1998, published in *Costruendo il «castello esteriore»* (Building the exterior castle), Città Nuova, Rome, march 2002.

Going in-depth Two Pope saints



On the occasion of the canonization of John XXIII and John Paul II let us remember them through what Chiara wrote about them in *Città Nuova*: in 1958 immediately after the election of Pope Roncalli and in 2005 when Pope Wojtyla left us. Two articles together with others in the book *Attualità*¹



John XXIII

When Pius XII left this earthly life it seemed as if a curtain of fog fell over the earth. And the word "orphan" best described the state of the soul of Christendom. Pius XII was our Father. [...]

Then those unforgettable days came with the smoke and the election. We too, immersed among the crowds, we saw the place of the Church in the hearts of the people! Because the people have their voice. In these two weeks this voice made itself strongly heard. It was a voice without words but just as powerful, that fused into one heart the hundreds of thousands of people reunited in St. Peter's without a leader, without even a voice to give them a direction. [...]

Finally we heard the habemus Papam and the much awaited name: Roncalli.

And here a phenomenon took place. In one, two, three days, everything was silent in the Church of Christ. No one understood why, but that name, that Pope, filled the great majority of persons of all kinds, with joy. We would like to say that if the death of Pius XII poured forth a universal mourning, the appointment of John XXIII provoked an explosion of universal joy.

Yes, Roncalli was also present before; he was in the list of very eminent cardinals. But

why weren't we aware of having such a treasure? This was the answer: because before, Roncalli was not Pope. Now he is. The Holy Spirit, who appointed him to this very lofty task, was also the best universal consoler. It is the Holy Spirit who illuminates these gifts, those aspects of his humanity, that new figure in white, so that now – aside from the fact that now, we no longer know what the word "orphan" means – we say: «He is precisely the one we needed. It is he who has the qualities of the gentle Christ here on earth. He is the one the world needs today». [...]

In John XXIII it is Jesus with an open heart who, full of love, says to his disciples: «My little children, love one another».

But since love is not love if it is not strong, in Him one can see the ease with which he is concrete and immediate: *Coepit facere et docere*. He is the Pope who is able to make the Church a family, with a universal embrace of humanity and a personal love for every one. In John XXIII one can see such extraordinary gifts of humility, of simplicity, that may disturb some people, those who live in the illusion of the superfluous or of appearances, or in the bloatedness of a science that does little to promote life. [...]

It is just a few days that we have Pope John XXIII, but with all our soul we want to tell him: «God gave you to us. We promise you faithfulness and love just like to Christ himself. Use us as only you know how, you, the only one in the world who can and knows how to govern the Church, the Body of Christ». [Città Nuova n.22/1958, p.2]

John Paul II

His sanctity. I too personally can bear witness to this. Often, after an audience with him, I had the impression that the heavens were opened. I found myself directly linked to God, in a very, very close union with him, without intermediaries. This is because the Pope is a mediator, but when he has brought you to God, he disappears. [...] This Pope communicated God

and he «makes all things new». A "presence" that became stronger as his burden of suffering became heavier up to his last hour.

But in this moment I cannot but express my deepest gratitude for many other doors that were opened by these keys: the Pope has always opened wide the doors to the novelty of the Spirit, which he has also recognized in our Movement, giving us his continuous encouragement and support, recognizing it as a gift of God and hope for all humanity.

[...] The story of the Focolare Movement is, in these last 27 years, a proof of that "something more" of love that lived in the heart of John Paul II. This, his "something more" of love called out to ours, and so the Pope entered into the depths of the heart of each member of the





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Movement. That is why we cannot use words that are simply human to say who he was for us. I can call to mind many memories of private audiences, that he granted me, often invitations to lunch in his house; his presence in our public events; his personal letters filled with warm affection and the exquisite telephone calls he made to greet me on the feast day of St. Clare, and this year also on my birthday. These are moments that have marked milestones in the the history of our Movement.

Now, at the moment of the passing away of the Holy Father, one remains amazed and with the soul full of gratitude in front of so much love and, at the same time, one is grateful to God for having been able to be beside him and to lend him a hand, as children and "sister", as he chose to call me in one of his last letters.

A few days after his election he wanted to get to know me and so he invited me the attend the mass which he concelebrated in his private chapel. On that occasion he realized, from a map that I had brought for him, the extent of the diffusion of our Movement. In the years that followed, with great joy he came to know our «focolarino people», as he called them, spread all over the world where he had become a pilgrim, and he often told us that our presence was a comfort and support for him in his apostolic trips.

An unforgettable date, that has remained as one of the most beautiful in our history, was the 19th of August 1984, the day of his visit to our international Center in Rocca di Papa. On that occasion he not only singled out love as the "inspiring spark "of everything that is done in the name of Focolare», he also expressed something that we never dared to say, by affirming that he saw in our Movement «the same physiognomy of the Church just as she auto-defined Herself in the Second Vatican Council».

Another episode that is very significant goes back to September 23, 1985, when at the door, at the end of an audience with him, looking to the future, I dared to ask him: «Do you think it is possible that the president of the Focolare Movement, of this Opera which is of Mary, may always be a woman?». «Yes – he answered – certainly!». And it was from his words, which motivated that "yes", that a new awareness of the Church in her two dimensions, opened up for me: the Petrine and the Marian one. [...]

Yes, we can be proud and grateful that the Holy Spirit had given us a Pope like John Paul II for many years and we are certain that the Church will soon elevate him to the altar of sainthood.

The news spread all over the world that after he awoke from the tracheotomy the Holy Father wrote on a piece of paper «I am always totus tuus!». This motto *Totus tuus* was his truth lived out, that truth which gave him an unmistakable Marian nature and which made him so great and so delicately human, so noble and at the same time so much a man for everyone, authentic "servant of the servants of God"». [*Città Nuova* n. 7/2005, pp. 10-12]

Chiara Lubich

1 Taken from *Attualità*, prepared by Michele Zanzucchi, ed. *Città Nuova*, Rome 2012, pages 21-23; 126-131

Towards the Assembly

Dimension of the Opera

The assemblies of the zones, the Cittadellas and the Centers have taken place. For the first time the gen will participate with the right to speak and to vote



us all to arrive at the Assembly in this spirit of persons with the dimension of the Opera. If I think of what we would like to do, I realize that there are similar experiences existing in the world. And so I feel that this could be an extraordinary event, not just for us, but for humanity».

[Argentina]

The results of the different zonal Assemblies, of those done in the Cittadellas and in our Centers have arrived. One can notice a very high level of participation in all of them. Some, due to health reasons, could not come personally, but they told the others how they are participating albeit in a different way and they also shared their thoughts.

A novelty: it is the first time in the history of the General Assembly of the Opera that in the Gen2 Centers, some gen boys and gen girls were elected to represent them, and who will participate with the right to speak and to vote. For them it is a very significant opportunity. Here are some impressions that they wrote to accompany their personal dat

«For the Assembly it seems to me that I can already say "we feel" rather than "I feel", inasmuch as we are already working as one body. Surely it is a service to be able to love the gen Movement and the whole Opera. The Assembly, I think, is another excuse to put Jesus in the midst and to make us work as Him». [Italy]

«After a year at the gen Center I strongly feel what it means to "be Opera". I would like

«The Assembly is a novelty and a big surprise for me. I am very happy to be able to participate and to live this moment with the whole Opera as a gen. I feel the responsibility of doing things with Jesus in the midst and in this way to represent all the gen of the world. The Assembly is a challenge for me to always be in His Will, to live the other, so that the other gen can feel that they are present at the Assembly through us». [Slovacchia]

«For the Assembly, I feel that I have to live for the others in order to understand what God wants from us. I feel that it is something great for me, and that I must let myself be guided as His instrument so that His will can be realized in the Opera. Since I am not at the Center in this moment I also feel that I must offer my prayers everyday for the Assembly». [Burundi]

«Preparing for the Assembly I slowly discover that everything is on a journey side by side, in the spirit of collective discernment, and I realized two things: regarding how much God has done among us in the past years ». [Philippines]

Many knots of unity

The Cittadella El Diamante of Mexico welcomes
the Assemblies of the new Zone Hispano-America 1



It was the 28th of March when the Cittadella Il Diamante (The Diamond), dressed for a gala, welcomed its most awaited guests. «Finally the time has come to meet one another from all the nations of the new Zone, Hispano-America 1 – Gustavo Alvarado explained – [...] We still don't know what name to choose for it, but what we know is that we want to be one». For some it was a great homecoming after many years, for others it was a novelty, but for everyone it was a feeling of «being at home».

In presenting the three-day program of communion, retreat and election of representatives (for the Opera and for the Section), Delia Pairetti and Gustavo Alvarado presented the new Zone not as a grouping of three parts, but as a reality that calls for a wider communion. «It is not a new structure that we are called to build but to give life to a communion of soul that embraces everyone. And in this way, there will be many who will spread the message of the Gospel».

Introduced by Imelda Bronzino and Giuseppe (Regno) Righetti we moved on to the meditation on the answers and thoughts about the «legacy of Chiara»: when she said that we will not remain orphans because the Holy Spirit would remind us of everything that she has given us; that the Opera would go ahead safely if it is in the hands of Jesus in the midst, and therefore there is nothing to wor-

ry about for the future; that He (Jesus in the midst) will make the Opera and our part is that of being faithful to Jesus Forsaken.

Zone Assemblies

To illuminate the relationship between the communities of the different Countries, enormously supported by their common language, it is necessary to form a net woven by all of us, with knots of unity. It is necessary to know that it is the life that counts before everything else; to reflect on local projects articulated by timetables for their realization; to promote synergies that mobilize the different talents spread throughout the Zone; to go ahead with the «mind» of Jesus in the midst.

The communion that followed, abundant, varied, enriching, left everyone with the taste of the family and the respect for the gifts of each one. It made us recognize in one another, brother peoples, over and beyond prejudices that divide and the cultural or social differences. It also brought out opinions regarding the Zone or Zonetta Councils, interaction among the gen and collaboration among the experts of the mass movements. Venues of various formation with the contribution of everyone.

From the point of view of unity we want to build the reality of communion in the new Zone as we approach the moment of the election of the representatives for the female and male Central Assemblies, for the Opera and for the Section. The atmosphere is that of a family and also solemn at the same time, with the awareness of carrying out an action that is both responsible and committed.

In conclusion we saw together that a common denominator that we all share is the spirit of open and creative collaboration that draws us together in a affectionate and effective communion at the service of our communities.

A newsletter already tested on a small scale will make the news circulate among everyone.

prepared by the editorial board

The Charism in action



© Paulo Wang CSC x 2

Emmaus and Giancarlo have concluded their trip to the zones of Brazil. A month that was rich with surprises from the Holy Spirit: the life, fruits, challenges

«I have the impression that it will be a trip full of surprises and what will happen in Brazil will not only be for this Country, but for the whole world». These were the words that Emmaus shared with the team of the Collegamento CH, two months ago, in view of the Collegamento that would take place in Brazil on April 19.

At the end of the trip we can say that the forecast became a reality! It is a design of unity that was composed in the different stages of this trip and which can now be seen in its entirety. There were those who spoke of a «unity with a charismatic flavour». More than one person, deeply moved, said: «Chiara was not able to come to Ibirapuera in '98, but she has come now». «The charismatic times have not ended! We saw the Charism in action!».

Photos. Above, the meeting on April 21 with the intern members of Central South in San Paolo. On the right, with the youth of the Cittadella Gloria, in the Amazon.

And in the background, a Brazil that is acquiring a strategic position on an international level, a Country rich in humanity, joy, rhythm, music, generosity, intelligence, natural beauty, different cultures fused into one people. But also a Country interspersed with great contradictions: the demands of the indigenous peoples, a masked racism that up to today affects those of African descent, a serious economic and social gap that generates violence, giving way to drugs and death, phenomena that affect the youth and the very young most of all. The most widespread face of Jesus Forsaken.



© Caris Mendes CSC

The social challenge. Since the arrival of Ginetta Calliari, Marco Tecilla, Lia Brunet and the other focalini they had experienced a strong impact when faced with the social problems. Chiara, way back towards the end of the '60s, had prophetically foreseen the outline of the answer that the Charism would have given to recompose in unity the great diversity and richness of the culture of this Country and of all of Latin America, so as to then give a gift of all these to the world.

Many steps in this journey have been taken in these years. The presence of Jesus in the midst, that was so special during these days, gave rise to a new awareness, bringing to a fullness the blossoming of what had been built in time, not without difficulties, both past

burden that does not belong to just a group of people, the entrepreneurs. It is a new awareness. Giancarlo spoke of a prophecy. He would repeat it in various occasions: «The prophet brings a new reality from God, but he has to pass through a desert of difficulties. And this is what makes this experience full of sacredness».



March 25, «Chiara Lubich Chair» at the Catholic University of Pernambuco



April 9 at the Jardim Margarida, Mariapolis Ginetta

and present.

Economy of communion. Industrial Parks of the Mariapolis Ginetta and Santa Maria of the Northeast. So as to bring about a new «relaunching», a luminous remedy: a «something more» made up of communion on all levels, as Emmaus highlighted, a sharing of the entire Opera in the burden of the enterprises, a

Social projects. In each stage of the trip Emmaus and Giancarlo gave priority to the visit to some of the various social initiatives that for more than ten years now, have been going ahead in the various regions of Brazil and which are inspired by the Charism. An example is the «Belem Mission», that welcomes the homeless, who have fallen prey to drugs and prostitution. The meetings in Recife are quite surprising, such as that with two youth, ex-gen, founders of a new community and in Fortaleza, at the CEU, the Spiritual Condominium where 22 old and new communities live together. The visits to Guarantiguetá, in the State of San Paolo, to the Fazenda de Esperança, were very moving. A common point that was requested of Emmaus and Giancarlo was that these works continue to be nourished by the Movement. In each meeting, the communion grew. Emmaus expressed this with an image: the charism of unity is the root of a tree with many branches, many fruits, inserted through reciprocal love, in one design: the realization of the dream of Jesus: «that all may be one».

An invitation to communion. Then the meeting at the Mariapolis Ginetta with the communities and social organizations of the Movement that were born in Brazil and in other parts of Latin America, which were given full recognition



Il 6 aprile a Belem festa per i 50 anni dell'arrivo dell'Ideale in Amazonia

by Emmaus and Giancarlo: «You are totally in the Charism». A new step is now being asked of the whole Opera. Giancarlo spoke of a certain «anxiety» – he would repeat this many times – exactly the opposite of accommodating oneself in a tranquil and serene life and ignoring the needs of the brothers. He poses the question about the relationship between the social projects and the communities of the Movement. Is each one going their own way? The keyword is still, once again «communion».

Emmaus at the meeting with the focolarini invited all to make an examination of conscience there where the poor consider us as rich: «because it goes against the social equality the God wants to see among brothers». «If we look at the needs of the others – she affirmed – we will see our pseudo-needs in the right perspective, we will be more attentive in the use of the things that God gives us



April 11 and 12: the meeting with the EoS at the Mariapolis Ginetta

and to place them at the disposition of the others». This invitation, that was repeated on many occasions, and which involves the whole Opera, calls on each one to widen their hearts to a greater love.

But Emmaus also warned them against exclusivism that creates conflicts. She widened their view to the multiplicity of answers that make the Opera a mosaic made up of many tiles, each one indispensable, so as to compose the design of unity in diversity.

This was seen in the meeting with the Bishops who share the spirituality of unity: so many experiences of communion lived by them within the ecclesial bodies, in their dioceses! Then those involved in the field of politics, who are making fraternity the fundamental law of their commitment so that what they do will be an authentic service for the common good, also left with renewed energy.



March 29, with the «people» of the Northeast in Recife

The mosaic of the Opera appeared in all its beauty and variety of cultures, experiences immersed in the most urgent problems, above all in the three big meetings with the intern members of the Northeast, North and Central South of Brazil. There, where the African descendants are still wounded daily by racial prejudice, they find themselves healed by the Ideal, by the supernatural family that welcomes them. Where the ancient civilizations of indios demand their rights, there are those who don't pass by with indifference, but join them with the strength of the Gospel. And we could go on and on. Up to the final explosion at the meeting of more than 3,000 present in San Paolo, ending with an afternoon rich in creativity, openness and immediate and profound dialogue with the young people.

The final words. Giancarlo: «Thank you for the presence of God that has accompanied this trip that exploded precisely in these days of Easter. It is an irrepressible experience that will continue and that marks a new beginning».

Emmaus: «I was deeply moved by your song dedicated to Our Lady of Aparecida! I went to her Shrine and I entrusted the whole Opera to her. It seems to me that this song is her answer: "I will take care of it. The Work of Mary is my Opera". My wish is that this, her Opera, may be woven with "embroideries of light". The thread of this embroidery is in Her hands, and so we can go ahead with confidence. I wish for everyone to be another Her in this land, just as Chiara had taught us».

Carla Cotignoli

Su Mariapolis online the special coverage of the various stages of the trip of Emmaus and Giancarlo to Brazil:
www.focolare.org/notiziariomariapoli

The 60° anniversary of the priesthood of Fr. Foresi

When light is incarnated

On the occasion of the 60° anniversary of the priesthood of Fr. Pasquale Foresi, Città Nuova has printed a text that contains his philosophical and theological reflections. An instrument for the formation to the spirituality of unity

«The charismatic gifts that God, from age to age, generously gives to his people and that often take the form of a new spirituality, that sheds light on the contents of the Revelation so it could be lived more profoundly, are always linked to concrete circumstances and persons who act as mediators of those gifts at the service of the Church and of all humanity. In the case of the founders of great spiritual movements we can observe that often, in his design of love, God puts, be-

One of these figure is Pasquale Foresi, the first focolarino priest of the Work of Mary and the first Co-president, an extremely rich personality in which Chiara Lubich always recognized a particular "design" in the growing Opera, that of the incarnation, which means the task of helping to materialize into concrete works the intuitions and the actions that the Holy Spirit was gradually arousing in her. In this way, in the history of the Focolare Movement, thanks to this remarkable and in many ways paradigmatic unity between Chiara Lubich and Pasquale Foresi, the fundamental dimensions of the charism of unity in the field of thought and of culture, in the field of its juridical regulations, of its structures of formation, its activities of diffusion and publications, and others, took shape. If the encounter with Iginio Giordani started, aside from the 360° opening up of the Movement to humanity, also that experience of light that we know



side the original depository of the charism, other people who fulfill a very important function according to its historical configuration. The story of the charism of unity does not escape from this human-divine dynamics. In effect, beside Chiara Lubich, aside from her first women and men companions, we find already in the early years of its foundation, other important figures that were fundamental for that gift to be fully unfolded.

as Paradise '49, the encounter with Fr. Foresi saw to it that those illuminations would find the adequate structures and the suitable instruments of mediation and incarnation. [...] Fr. Foresi is the model of all the members of the Work of Mary, who in some way have to recreate in themselves the same task: to make life concrete, to mediate and to incarnate, the light of the charism of unity according to one's own vocation ».

This is how Maria Voce explains the fundamental role carried out by Fr. Foresi in the history of the Focolare Movement. The passage we cited here is taken from the presentation that Emmaus wrote for the book *Luce che si incarna, commento ai 12 punti della spiritualità dell'unità* (Light that is incarnated, a commentary of the 12 points of the spirituality of unity), soon to be released in these days by the Città Nuova press. It is an editorial tribute that the Editorial Group Città Nuova and the Center of the Opera is dedicating to Fr. Foresi to celebrate an important goal: the sixty years of his priestly ordination: 1954 - 2014.

The book is a collection of texts that outline the twelve points of the spirituality of unity. Texts that are quite different from each other: some are real and proper themes, well thought out and structured as such, others are conversations with focolarini, families, priests... during congresses, conventions or international schools. All of them, as Giuseppe Maria Zanghì explains in the introduction to the volume, highlight a typical characteristic of Fr. Foresi: «a life rooted in wisdom; wisdom always grasped and expressed rationally», so much so that he took on a fundamental role in the birth and in the history of the study of the spirituality of unity, an anticipatory experience of the subsequent Abbà School.

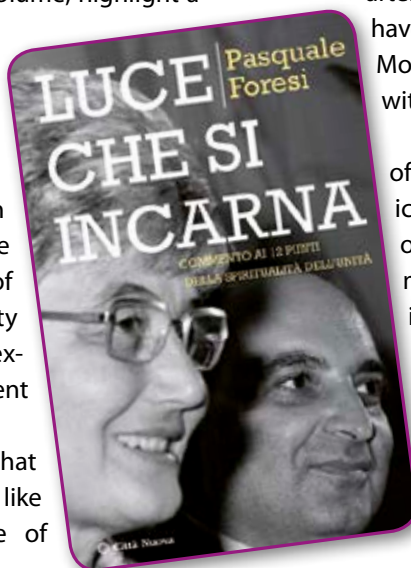
They are reflections that follow one after another like precious pearls because of



their ability to highlight the richness of our spirituality; which accompany us in the discovery of its many, very many treasures, of an intellectual, spiritual and vital character. In them one can see the design of a Work of God born to give an answer to two great questions of man, today and always, which religions and philosophies have tried to give an answer to in the past: the relationship with God and the neighbor and the problem of suffering. From these two questions, just as Fr. Foresi emphasizes in these writings, a new culture and a new way of thinking is derived which make up a prompt reply of God to the needs of humanity. Page after page we find the stages that have marked the history of the Movement with its pains and with its lights.

A book that is a collection of a «summa» of the philosophical and theological reflections of Fr. Foresi and a text of formation to our spirituality. An instrument of meditation on the cornerstones of our Ideal.

Elena Cardinali



Youth for a united world

Between the local and the global



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**Progettualità, concretezza, continuità.
Gli animatori dei Giovani per un mondo
unito fanno il punto della situazione**

It's not easy to have a free weekend to come to Castel Gandolfo, seeing that there are the ongoing preparations for the United World Week. The departure for Nairobi is also approaching, for the much-awaited building site of reciprocity «Sharing with Africa». The meeting of the animators is scheduled at the end of March: luminous days of being family and of new relationships built.

«One city is not enough» set the tone of the meeting (from March 28 to 30) where we went in-depth regarding the commitment of the young people on the local and on the global level. How can a young person of today commit himself or herself on the local level while at the same time maintaining a universal vision? Chiara herself answered this and the many experiences that arrived bear witness to this.

Nowadays, it is almost a miracle that a young person is able to put aside the daily glittering offers to develop a passion for «what is not beautiful» that surrounds us in the sick people, the poor, the lonely, the drug addicts ... But young people like this do exist!

More than just a meeting, it was more of a laboratory: with Paula Luengo and Serena Scottò, specialists in social psychology, we worked on the instruments necessary to form a group and to bring it ahead in all its varied dynamics. With Lucia D'Auria we entered into the phase of description and realization of a project. Their professionalism, which when placed at the service of fraternity becomes fascinating, was much appreciated. And what about continuity? A workshop on this aspect was also useful to learn how to bring ahead the expected objectives with regularity.

An entire afternoon was dedicated to the focal point of this year: building bridges between the African continent and the rest of the world, through, «Sharing with Africa». The interview of Deogratias Kasujia and Maria Magnolfi, that touched on the topic of inculturation, helped us to prepare ourselves for the experience that we will be living in Nairobi from the end of April to early May and which





Possible
focolarinas and focolarinos

«Without half measures»

**In Loppiano 150 young people
of different nationalities deepen
the vocation of the focolare**

will be marked by the exchange and sharing of the values that are typical of the African culture, where the individual is always part of the whole. It is the concept of «Ubuntu», in which the value and the realization of the person is defined by his relationships with others.

With the Gen Rosso instead, we travel together to the Philippine islands, the destination of their last concert tour, discovering art, as a way of building a United World. The group work to prepare the proposals for the coming Assembly was also quite exciting.

Excerpts of Chiara's visit to the African continent, at the Genfest, at the United Nations, made us catch a glimpse of those signs of the times that indicate the slow but irreversible journey of humanity towards universal brotherhood, that we wanted to highlight.

Then we took stock of the situation of the ambitious task of the United World Project: the 1st of May, during the opening of the United World Week 2014, at the worldwide direct transmission, the Atlas of fraternity will be launched, which was realized following the collection of more than 800 fragments of fraternity.

Maria Guaita, Andrew Camilleri

In the last week of March Loppiano welcomed more than 150 young people who wanted to get to know and to go in-depth in the reality of the focolare, the first part was dedicated to those who had already decided to follow this «way». The second part was for those youth who were «interested». The different nations from the south to the north of the world were well represented and among them some Muslim gen and others belonging to various Churches. The program included: deepening of some themes, experiences, a lot of dialogue, skype link-ups with focolares in the peripheries of the world, focolare life and moments of «private talk» with God. And finally, as a gift for everyone, an exciting performance of the Gen Verde at the Lionello Industrial Park: a moment of a captivating celebration!

What did we experience, and what remained in our hearts? Maybe a few impressions can tell us this even if words cannot easily express an experience of family, of the supernatural, of doubts shared and resolved, of lights and of fears that are common to all of us:

«I touched with my hands that the Opera is a family. This encouraged me to go ahead on the journey that I am starting. I feel free to risk everything». *Edel*

«I came like a blank sheet of paper. It is a meeting that was made just right for me. First of all, I felt that I had to concentrate on God». *Marek*

«Listening, joy and paying attention to what God wants us to understand for our way. I feel the fire of this choice, the sensation of being on the right path!». *Tiago*



«I was really touched by the personal relationship that Chiara had with each one - as Serenella shared with us - and I felt closer to Chiara». *Marie*

«...The doubts are never lacking and one of the strongest was: does entering the focolare mean that I am closing myself up? Then, after the video of Chiara at the U.N. entitled "Towards l'Ut omnes", I understood that entering the focolare does not mean to disappear from the world, rather the three "flights" serve to make us more free to reach and to embrace those faces of Jesus Forsaken in the world that otherwise I may never be able to reach». *Mitti*

«What was particularly beautiful were the skype calls with the focolare of Morro in Florianópolis and the one of Istanbul, which highlighted the challenges they faced in zones in the frontiers. I want to give my life to Him and for each one who passes beside me, just as Jesus Forsaken did». *Marco*

«It is not yet clear to me if my way is that of the focolare, but I feel that I must start to take steps to understand my vocation». *Felipe*

«I participated in this meeting out of curiosity. I wanted to know what the focolare life is made up of and above all I didn't want to close any road leading to my vocation. It was an experience that went beyond all my expectations! I always saw the focolare as something distant and extraordinary, but I understood that it is lived with much simplicity. I feel enriched». *Maria Roberta*

«These days were a strong confirmation of my choice. We experienced heavenly moments! We were all actors and we made the experience of a true focolare». *Racim*

«I liked seeing the greatness of the Opera and understanding it, I can live for it even in the small things». *Cynthia*

«I think that the life of the focolarinas does not require special talents or specific characteristics... maybe it is that stubborn faith in the love of God and in His plans that makes it extraordinary, or extraordinarily normal». *Lidia*



For the group of "interested" young people, having started their meeting with a visit-pilgrimage to Assisi to discover the humus in which the roots of the charism of Chiara are buried, turned out to be a fundamental and moving experience. Finally, the impression of a gen boy significantly expressed what everyone experienced: «I was touched by the experience we made of entering into each other, to contemplate the call of God in each one».

For the girls it was discovering the Opera in all its beauty, and its continuing enchantment because of its radicalness. Its various expressions, the embrace of the whole world, the variety of the past and present experiences, foresee in the future an image of a leap forward and of hope. At the heart of this Opera, Chiara revealed, are the focolarinos and focolarinas at the service of all, the heart that never ceases to beat, with the hope of making it up to the end because it is together with this supernatural family.

Cécile Marie Bréchet, Ralf Figgener

New Families

A love that never ends

The waiting was great for a meeting that had not been held again for the past three years: it was that of the «separated» who have remained faithful to the sacrament of marriage

They were 160, each one with a story of abandonment, disappointment, anger, the devastation of a plan made for a journey in two and then thrown into a life - not by choice - of loneliness. Impoverished by having to financially support two households. The fathers, experience difficult relationships with the children, who are usually entrusted to the mother, who often don't make their encounters any easier. People who are socially marginalized, because no one invites them anymore to dinners, outings, etc. Persecuted (these are their words) by relatives who cannot tolerate the fact that they were not able to keep their marriage together. Mocked by their "ex", who have made a new life.

The title of the meeting (4-7 April) was «A love that never ends», and from the first remarks, that Friday evening, they who have experienced a human love that is no longer reciprocated were encouraged to make a profound choice of God, helped by two brief but intense excerpts of Chiara and by the experiences of others who are themselves separated.

The emcee, who is also separated, was able to involve the audience without the need for any mediation.

The two specific themes were presented: the first by Angelo Alessi, psychologist, on resil-

ency, the process of re-elaboration and acceptance of suffering so as to find oneself, and the ability to love the others; the second theme was presented by Viviana Colonnetti on the new educative contexts after separation. Both were very much appreciated, and provoked a dialogue that was open and with much participation.

Fr. Paolo Gentili, director of the Family Office of the Italian Bishops' Conference, illustrated with love the preciousness of the life of one who has chosen to walk the path of faithfulness to the sacrament, often a victim of prejudices.

Doni Fratta, who for many years lived with Chiara, and knowing how much she had



the separated in her heart, brought them «her Crucifix», that one of the 7th of December 1943, displaying it on the altar during the Mass. In the end all 160, accompanied by the choir of the Mariapoli Romana, were able to give to that crucifix, expressions of the extreme measure of faithful love, their life, their «yes».

*Angela Pozzi,
Stefano Serratore*



Communion and Law

Together towards universal brotherhood

At Castel Gandolfo from March 13 to 15 the Seminar promoted by Communion and Law saw the participation of around 45 university professors, doctorate fellows, students and professionals from America, Africa and Europe

Launched last autumn, through the website www.comunionediritto.org and the local chapters of Communion and Law, with the request, for whoever desired to do so, to propose a personal contribution on themes regarding the environment, the Environment seminar, legality, the participation was seen as a venue for an open exchange of ideas.

Various persons who presented themes came in contact with Communion and Law for the first time. Divided into five sessions, eighteen works were approved and presented, united by their commitment to the respect of the environment, to the protection of health and by the effective participation of individuals and of the community.

The papers presented by Armel M. Mouloungui, doctor of research at the University of Lyon, who presented the situation of the forest management and the participation of the indigenous peoples of Gabon, and that of Ranaivomanana Maminirina Mihaja (Madagascar), who is involved in the protection of the marine and coastal heritage, aroused a special interest.

Many and important contributions from Brazil underlined the commitment for a sustainable development for the present and future generations in the light of a culture that sinks its roots in the principles of fraternity.

Also particularly appreciated were the interventions regarding the protection of labourers and the responsibility of enterprises.



A wide view on the Constitution and on European legislation allowed the work done to be anchored on a strong juridical base and from there to open up the group work, in view of the preparation for the forthcoming international Congress, scheduled for November 13-5, 2015.

The greetings of Joao Manoel Motta and Vera Araujo, of the Centre for dialogue with culture, of the Focolare Movement, was an invitation that was fully embraced, to collaborate with the other realities of the Movement who are interested in the Environment and Ecology, primarily with «EcoOne».

The unexpected visit of Emmaus gave a push to the participants to bring ahead an action, without waiting for immediate solutions, but with the awareness of walking together towards universal brotherhood.

The future appointments:

- a summer school, in Portugal (Mariapolis Arco-iris), 26-29 July 2014;
- in Roma, the periodic meetings will start again, at the S. Eustachio Hall, you may find more information in our website.

Maria Giovanna Rigatelli, Gianni Caso

EcoOne

An exportable model

Steps forward of professionals in the field of environment.
The event in Castel Gandolfo marks a turning point

For many reasons, EcoOne, which was held at the Mariapolis Center of Castel Gandolfo from April 4-6, was an extraordinary international convention:

- The number of participants (around 90) - almost double the usual - from Italy, Portugal, Spain, United Kingdom, France, Belgium, Switzerland, Poland, Hungary, United States, Colombia, Brazil, Argentina and Iran.

- Their qualities: almost all are researchers and professionals in the field of environment (among them was the former person in-charge of the Technology Department and the person in-charge of the Environmental Department of the ENEA, a government agency for sustainable development).

- Their joy: they continued to thank us for the level of the content and the thoroughness of the organization. Some, although not members of the Movement, have for some time now been actively participating in the activities of EcoOne. Others, completely new, were enveloped by the atmosphere of the convention and conquered by the charisma that was intrinsic in the programme.

- The presence of the youth: high school students (opportunately prepared and only for a part of the program, university students and young researchers. The «Piero Pasolini» award was given to one of the latter for the quality of her oral presentation.

- The level of the dialogue on the hall and in the working groups that developed into the editing of some programmatic points for future developments.

- The resonance of the event that was reported in Italian, European and American institutional websites.

Surely, the commission tried to organize an event with scientific dignity and care in all the details, working hard in these past two years, but this does not explain everything. I believe that God blessed our constant and sincere efforts to keep Jesus in the midst within the commission and to establish synergies with the different realities of the Opera; other inundations, Action for a United World, Youth for a United World, Sophia University Institute, New Humanity, without forgetting the fundamental and silent contribution of the Mariapolis Center and the Translation Office.

Our impression is that the convention marked a point of no return: its format is mature, and it is time that it is exported - inculturating it - outside of Italy: for this reason we were particularly happy about the confirmation that Argentina will host the next international Convention of EcoOne (2016). Brazil has also expressed the desire to invite us for a first meeting with intern members who are working in the environmental field (2015) in view of a future international Convention (2018?). In the meantime, the United States is thinking about how our presence could be useful in a «Summer School» and a first meeting of intern members in the field of ecology is also being planned in the United Kingdom.

Luca Fiorani



Sportmeet

Live your challenge

In the year of the football World Cup, Sportmeet proposes new reflections around high level sports

Values and constructive criticism of competition in sports. This was the compass used by Sportmeet to direct the work in the sixth international congress that was held in Tirrenia (Pisa – Italy) from the 3rd to the 6th of April at the Center for Olympic Training of the CONI. An appointment inspired by the words of Emmaus who in her message wanted to promote a new style of competition: «To compete, first of all, in loving and respecting one another and to grasp every conquest, every victory as an occasion to give and to give oneself even more».

There were 12 nations represented by more than 200 participants with an original variety of passions and roles in the world of sports that contributed to painting a interdisciplinary and cultural picture of great importance around the delicate context of competitive sports. From sociology to the psychology of sports passing through the analysis of competition in economics thanks to the contribution of Prof. Benedetto Gui, professor of political economics at the University of Padua and member of the EoC.

A real treasure, this «unity in diversity» that Sportmeet had grasped eversince its founding

in Loppiano in 2002: it is only through dialogue and comparison that it is possible to promote a new sports culture.

On the stage that was set-up in the gymnasium of the Olympic Center, there was an array of university professors, trainers, sports educators, psychologists, ex-athletes, institutional and political authorities in the world of sports such as the Nino Saccà, vice president and vicar of the Italian Rugby Federation who underlined the noble origins of the sport «brutality played by gentlemen» where everyone is important to be able to reach the goal and to keep the ball in play.

To stimulate dialogue in the hall and to keep the atmosphere effervescent, was Alessandro Birindelli, ex-defender of the Juventus and of the National team, who is today responsible for the youth sector of the Pisa Football Club, who during a championship match for newcomers (11-12 years age bracket) he withdrew his team from the game following a fight among parents and thus incurred sanctions from the Football Federation. «Occasions such as this offered by Sportmeet – Birindelli emphasized – are very important for those working in sports especially to understand if what they do everyday is going in the right direction. At Tirrenia there should be more leaders and players so as to understand what the true meaning of sports is».

A sport of high performance where the desire to win and the fear of losing become two faces of the same medal. In the midst of this is the respect for adversaries, honesty, the will power to say «no» to doping, in a world that has lost the awareness of competition.

Giovanni Bettini





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With the pentecostals «You make us participate in the charism of Chiara!»

A course prepared for those responsible for ecumenical dialogue to study the criteria of discernment for the growing relationship with the pentecostal world.

120 were present from Europe, Korea and Brazil: pentecostals, reformed, catholics, members of the lutheran and orthodox Churches, at Castelgandolfo from the 11th to the 13th of April.

There is an estimated 700 million faithful, around thirty nine thousand denominations, with various gradations of ecclesiality, this is the panorama of pentecostalism today, as presented by Pastor Albert Pataky, president of the Hungarian Pentecostal Churches.

They went through the history, the development and the diffusion of the variegated pentecostal world with the help of experts among whom was Mons. Juan Usma of the Pontifical Council for Christian Unity and Professor Teresa Rossi member of the international dialogue between Catholics and Pentecostals.

An interesting picture of the ecumenical relationships of the Charismatic catholics with the various non-Catholic charismatic-pentecostal realities was offered to us by Michelle Moran, president of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal and member of the «Together for Europe» Committee.

A very involving story on how a pentecostal community is born was presented by Udo and Ilona Knöfel, founders of the Jesus-Gemeinde Sohland. In the dark years of the Soviet occupation of East Germany they found their Christian faith. Now they do fruitful work

in the what is considered as the most atheist places in Europe: there, they say, «we want to be a tiny cell in the mystical body of Christ».

The meditations of Chiara Lubich were strong and incisive. After her video on reciprocal love, a Catholic spontaneously asked for forgiveness for the many prejudices she kept in her heart towards the pentecostals. One of their pastors stood up and embraced her and citing the first letter to the Corinthians affirmed that the most important charism is that of love. «Pride divides, love unites ... It is the Holy Spirit who wants to unite us». Other pentecostals echo this, among whom is the director of Youth with a Mission in Switzerland: «I firmly believe that the only way towards the unity of Christians is love».

Some of the experiences regarding the relationship among Catholics of the Movement and pentecostals lived in daily life, give us courage.

These days were important both for the Catholics and for our Pentecostal brothers and sisters: «Thank you for sharing with us Chiara and the life of the Focolare Movement!»; «Here something new was born and it cannot be stopped!».

Maria Wienken

Small photo above. The pastor Albert Pataky in the middle with Fr. Karoly Nagy and Dori Fialovsky, from Hungary

Project Italy

Education under construction

At Castel Gandolfo an important stage of Project Italy. The new generations at the center of the commitment of schools, families, educative agencies



In the circle of Project Italy, launched two years, we started to meet periodically also as Education Under Construction to discuss the theme of «educational emergency», a title that expresses the unity of intent with the Italian Church. This year marks a new stage: on April 12 and 13 at Castel Gandolfo 35 participants, coming from the various Italian Zones, members of the different branches and movements (the contributions of the mppu were quite stimulating), with Mario Ciabattini and Luisa Gennaro, counselors for the Big Zone of Italy. Everyone had the desire to be always more One Opera.

Each of those present represented the life of many years and the mature reflections of the Italian zones, in a rich plurality of educational experiences, that now hopes to find a new modality so as to be shared fully and brought up to the national level. Everyone felt called to the role of being a «knot of the net» of this operative center of the Education Under Construction.

They worked with passion and great competence in three groups, around themes that were the common denominators of many

on-going projects in the zones: «Active citizenship and legality»; «Education to peace and to solidarity»; «Education to emotions and to sexuality», themes that were translated also in brief introductions by those who have acquired a specific competence «in the field».

At the end of the two days, in which also the intervals were used as another form of pro-

ductive conversation on the themes (it was impossible to stop the people who shared a passion for education from talking non-stop about this topic!), some projected guidelines were outlined. It seems to us that the time has come, also because the civil and ecclesial institutions are asking this from us, to go out in the open with a unified educational project of the Movement in Italy.

If it is true that we have arrived - and we can document numerous projects with good educational practices, often in synergy or at the service of other bodies (just as Chiara taught us and asked us to do in the past) -, now we need a common organization of projects also as a point of reference for all the people of the Movement, with a clear physiognomy, that can be recognized juridically, make use of financing and have a greater effect in our territories. Concrete prospects opened up to allow us to act on the education system and to do so in such a way that education towards active citizenship, be re-proposed into the Italian School System and truly become a journey of learning so as to acquire relational and social competence, in view of a successful formation

A Day-Meeting in Montet

Reciprocity an experienced utopia

Spring is in the air in Montet, Sunday March 23, for a Day-Meeting of the Opera with the attractive title: "Reciprocity a source of joy. Utopia or reality?"



We elaborated on one of our proposals to continue to work together, in view of a seminar with some parliamentarians of the Education Commission that will take place this coming September. In the coming months work will also continue on the planning stages in order to arrive at a unified proposal «Italian level» with differentiated routes of actualization.

We will work so that these activities in the schools and in the territories will allow for access to formative credits (for teachers and students) and a ministerial recognition granted to «virtuous schools» that work towards the formation of the new generations to fraternity.

We left one another with a discrete *Ci siamo lasciati* con una discrete quantity of «homework» and with the appointments of May 10 in Rome with the Pope and the next edition of Loppiano Lab.

Patrizia Bertoncetto

A hundred people joined the inhabitants of the Mariapolis Foco to search for the elements of the answer to this question through moments of reflection and of testimonies in the hall, workshops on the theme of reciprocity lived in various environments, a game and a delicious "Canadian picnic" wherein each of the participants contributed something. Is it possible today in Swiss society to take care of the quality of daily relationships? A fifty-year old publicly took on this commitment at the end of

the day, while a lady asserted that reciprocity lived makes us breathe the atmosphere of Paradise.

Certainly with this day-meeting we felt that we must live the challenge that Emmaus left us last summer: to irradiate outside the Cittadella the life of the Gospel together with the persons of the Movement who live in the region around Montet. We experienced that reciprocal love is not a utopia, but it is truly a source of joy for ourselves and for everyone. The impressions we gathered confirm this: "The discovery of reciprocity as the creative source of unity and as a charisma that heals our wounded world". I really felt the desire to live this reciprocity around me and in particular with regards to the immigration policy"; the theme inflamed me. The music was beautiful, the dialogues were beautiful, so much life... I feel that I belong to this family».

Denise Roth, Robert Chadourne

Gen Verde

START NOW

A new show
and a renewed musical band.
Behind the scenes of a project
particularly aimed
at the youth

who knows where this will lead!

A new show, a new album entitled Music Made To Be Played, a new project tailor-made for the youth: START NOW. All of these signed Gen Verde.

In this moment we are 21 from 13 nations and, recalling the work done together this past year, what comes to light is the determination of totally giving it our all. We asked ourselves: what do we want to say with our songs, the dances, the theatrical and musical pieces? Yes, the aim is always «Ut omnes», but how do we want to convey this to many, to everyone? To whom in particular? We decided to concentrate on the youth, they who are the most effective thermometer to understand how the world is going today.

We searched for new musical, visual, theatrical forms of expression that are more appropriate to reach out to them and make ourselves understood. We participated in a school of pro-

fessional updating in the fields of the various artistic disciplines with professional teachers. But, among the most significant appointments for us were the moments of open and profound dialogue with young boys and girls from all over the world whom we invited to our house in Loppiano, and with those we met in the cities where we held our performances. We asked each one: what are the topics that are closest to your heart, that don't allow you to sleep at night? What are the problems that you encounter in your daily race between house, school and friends? What would you like to see in a show? Their answers came like an overflowing river: «Human rights are what I am very much concerned about», «I would like to see examples of adults who are credible and are role models», «I think that in the performances they must represent one's dreams, those things that one would like to realize in one's life, therefore to transmit one's life to the others, to make it known», «We want examples of life that have





greater impact than just theory, in this way they are more credible », «I am insecure, I want to change but I need something that will give me courage to do so. I lack a solid foundation to be able to make a choice». We got the inspiration for our new compositions from all these.

Another fundamental stage: the trip to the Holy Land. Last year we went to Haifa, Bethlehem, Nazareth where we met young girls and boys: Muslim, Christians, Jews, sometimes all in the same working group. The multi-disciplinary workshops were the occasion to launch the challenge of dialogue, sharing, comparison all as equals: we rediscovered the artistic discipline as a favoured instrument to communicate our Ideal, without using too many words. An Arab-Christian girl, at the end of the workshop, told us with tears in her eyes, that she never imagined that she would do something together with a Jewish youth and she discovered the novelty of getting to know his qualities and talents. Through these workshops with the youth, that which we believe in takes form and the others can thus discover it. This is the reason that START NOW was born: our project consists of the realization of song, dance, percussion and theatrical workshops that conclude on the stage where the young people join us in performing some of our pieces.

One of them said: «Here onstage I feel that I am another person, free to express myself, different». One of her companions answered: «look you can be like this everyday, or better still, you are already like this». Another: «I signed up for theatre thinking that it would be "easy". Instead I was asked to go deep into my soul, to uncover all its dark sides, to participate with my thoughts and physical strength. It is possible to launch a message together with each one bringing his or her own specific characteristics».

We performed START NOW also during our last concert tour in Spain. A young girl from Granada: «Having lived these days with you has changed my life. Now I am convinced that I must fight for what I want, for that which really interests me overcoming all obstacles that I find along the way. I want to improve and to smile more and, every time that I hurt someone, to ask for forgiveness». And still more: «All of you from Gen Verde are happy, looking at you I have found my vocation».



A priest told us: «You are able to bring out the best in everyone... from the youth, from us adults». The experience of the life of unity, from which every single idea and realization of our repertoire is born, makes us discover repeatedly how much the Charism of Chiara is the inexhaustible source of hope, a continuous platform of true relationships that give courage to choose, to change, to stake one's life. A religious sister said: «even if it costs "tears and hard work" (citing one of our new songs: Light up peace [Accendi la pace])... seeing in you this truth that is not hidden, but taken up with strength and responsibility and seeing that true joy is born from this... has been good for me». One of the professors in one of the schools we worked in in Spain said: «These teens have discovered that their life is important ». Their discovery is directly proportional to our joy of running towards everyone without counting the cost. Watch out for our new website that, in a few days, you will find updated: there you will find the dates and the news about our schedule as we undertake our world tour. Let's keep in contact! www.genverde.it

Alessandra Pasquali

The life of the community

Celebration at the Mariapolis Victoria

The Little Town of the Ivory Coast welcomed the meeting of the delegates of Africa

touched everyone was seeing how it was open to the neighborhood around it, it was teeming with people who walked through the town from early morning onwards: children who were going to the school nearby; the line of mothers with their harvest coming from the fields; the Medical Center

that welcomes around sixty of the most seriously ill people everyday; the printing press; the Information Technology Center... Every reality at the service of the populace and this is what the Delegates saw: a Little Town that lives for...

The community, paying their respects to the Counselors and the Delegates, showed their maturity. What came to light were the values of their culture and the welcome reserved for important people.

The Bishop of Man, Mons. Gaspard Béby Gnéba, came for a day to celebrate the Mass and to have dinner with them. He said: «Your presence bears witness to the universality of the Church».

For us it was rediscovering the Little Town and seeing it with new eyes: to see it in its design, with a great potential for radiation.

Pino Fiorucci, Vitoria Franciscatti

The inhabitants of the little town with the community of yacouba of Man, in an atmosphere of great joy, welcomed the Delegates of the Opera in Africa and Madagascar, last March 23. It is the first time in the history of the Opera that such a delegation visited this Little Town, born in 1992.

The other two African Little Towns are more well-known: the Mariapolis Maria May in Fontem, the heart of the beginning of the Ideal in Africa; the Mariapolis Piero in Nairobi, home of the school for inculturation and the various Pan-African conventions.

The meeting began on the 24th and ended on the 30th of March, 2014 with the whole community and also delegations coming from various villages.

It was an intense week where the challenges that this big continent faces were looked at together but above all the unity among everyone was renewed and reinforced so as to be credible witnesses of the gift received: the charism of unity.

A day was dedicated to visiting the various social realities and small enterprises present in the Little Town. For everyone it was a continuous surprise to see how complete the Little Town was even if in miniature. What really



Margaret Pawley

Passionate about unity

work and the ecumenical contacts of canon Pawley. Their home in Canterbury was always open to Chiara and to the focolarini: how many deep conversations took place in their living room!

Margaret was often invited to share her experience on the relationships among Roman Catholics and Anglicans, coming to speak many times also at the Anglican Center in Rome. With Bernard she co-wrote the book: «Rome and Canterbury through four centuries» (edited in 1974, revised in '81). In recognition of her work for the Anglican Church, she received the Cross of St. Augustine, the highest honour bestowed by the Church of England.

In 1980, when the first ecumenical schools of the Movement started in England, Margaret was a supporter of value and a counselor in the study groups that would meet three or four times a year to prepare the courses. Her passion for unity, accompanied by her acute genius and an incredible knowledge of English history, animated and enlightened the debates.

She was an ecumenist with a prophetic vision, a builder of the ecumenism of the people that she learned from Chiara, a person who believed in the «dialogue of life». We are privileged to have known her.

Lesley Ellison



Margaret Pawley con Chiara nel maggio 2003 a Berlino

On the 28th of February Margaret returned to the house of the Father, she was a great admirer and friend of Chiara Lubich and of the Movement. She was the wife of Rev. Bernard Pawley – canon of the Church of England – who in May 1961 met Chiara, recognizing in her spirituality «a fountain of living water that flowed from the Gospel». Convinced that the role of the Focolare is that of a «bridge» on which the Anglicans and the Catholics could meet, the canon Pawley dedicated himself to make it known, together with Margaret.

They met each other at Oxford where she was studying history. In the '50s she followed him to Italy, where he had been invited together with other Anglican priests, by the then Archbishop of Milan, Giovanni Battista Montini (the future Pope Paul VI) to deepen their reciprocal knowledge of each other's point of view. The canon Pawley was one of the observers at the Second Vatican Council. During this period in Rome, their apartment became the meeting place for the observers of Vatican II and also of Cardinals, Bishops and other dignitaries. When more people than were foreseen would come for lunch, Margaret would welcome them cordially and, in silence she would reorganize the portions of the meal. It was precisely during one of these occasions that she and Bernard met with Chiara. Many of the first visits of Chiara to England were made possible due to their

Photos. Margaret Pawley with Chiara in May 2003 in Berlin. Grottaferrata, April 1962. From the left: Fr. Pasquale Foresi, Igino Giordani, canon Bernard Pawley, Margaret Pawley, Chiara Lubich, Eli Folonari.

Fon of Fontem Lukas Njifua

Faithful to the pact with Chiara



Fon Lukas welcomed the the Center of the Opera on 26 september 2000

On April 2 the Fon of Fontem, Lukas Njifua, left us unexpectedly due to a pulmonary embolism. He was in Yaoundé, capital of Camerun, where he had been for some months working at the service of the State. Already the president of the South West Chiefs Conference, he was in fact recently nominated as Senator.

The news was received with profound surprise and pain by the whole populace. Emmaus too sent to Fontem her sincere closeness in his time of suffering and also her prayers and that of the whole Focolare Movement.

How can we ever forget that historic encounter between Fon Lucas – who welcomed the heritage of his father, Fon Defang – and Chiara in May 2000 when in the clearing on front of the Royal Palace of Azi he conferred upon her the title of Mafua Ndem = «Queen sent by Heaven». Chiara in that occasion invited everyone to ratify a «pact of mutual love that is strong and binding» to which they commit themselves – she said – «so as to be always in the fullness of peace among us and to recompose it every time that it would be broken». It is a pact that Chiara invited Fon Lucas to make also with the Fon of Fonjemetaw so that it may be the «starting point for bringing other peoples to unite themselves in this spirit». From here the project of the

New Evangelization was born, entrusted to the two "twin" Fons, as they were called in that occasion. From that moment on a rich correspondence began between Chiara and Fon Lukas, who kept her updated on each meeting and the development and effects of this project on all the populace.

In 2001 he was awarded the «Luminosa Prize» and Lukas Njifua in his talk to the Little Town said, among other things: «We would prefer to remain without food rather than without the meetings of the New Evangelization. There are so many fruits that we pray to God to make it possible for the whole world to share with us this experience».

In March 2008, upon receiving the news of Chiara's departure for Paradise, without hesitating he left for Rome, obtaining a visa in record time; together with the Fon di Fonjemetaw, he was one of the principal animators of the preparation of the cry die for Mafua Ndem in January 2009, that was unanimously desired by the entire Bangwa population.

In the last years, his work in politics had brought him away from Fontem for long periods of time, but he was always in contact with the focolarini.

We are grateful to him for having accompanied and supported the work of the Focolare in Fontem. We are certain that he will continue to intercede so that love will reign among his people and so that, as Chiara said in 2002, «also in the future the vocation of Fontem will be that of being "a city on the mountain", so that all can see, admire and imitate it».

Winnie Nwafor, Frantisek Slavicek

Fon Lukas receiving the Luminosa Prize 2001



Fr. Giovanni Sansone, crl

Apostle of unity

He left for heaven between the 5th and the 6th of January, the day of the Epiphany, at 84 years old, at night, alone, almost as if so as not to disturb those who were sleeping.

Born in Naples, in a numerous and well-off family, Giovanni felt the vocation to a religious life as a concrete commitment when, after the second world war, the immense material and moral destruction in his city called for the urgency of reconstruction. This is what he wrote to Chiara in June 2004 for the 50° anniversary of his priesthood, recalling his meeting with the Ideal in 1954: «... I was 24 years old. I was to be assigned to the community of St. Agnes in via Nomentana, in Rome. After a short time I met two focalinarinos, Lucio Dal Soglio and Pino Trova... It was an uninterrupted shower of graces, almost a persecution of love by Mary who didn't want to let me go, looking at me with a mother's gaze... up to the moment of my encounter with Fr. Silvano Cola and Fr. Novo, and the Opera as my country, my family. Forever. The initial anxiety I experienced due to a conflict between two vocations dissolved in the joyous discovery of just one design to be... an apostle of unity in that piece of Church where I was wanted, but for "ut omnes"».

he was a presence of great spiritual depth in the community of the Opera in Naples, among the religious men of the zone, in his priestly ministry that spanned half a century, in his positions of responsibility in the congregation of Regular Lateran Canons to which he belonged, and in the incessant commitment to the parish of Piedigrotta.

«I will give you a new heart, I will put a new spirit in you, I will take away from you the heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh» (Ez 36, 26) was the Word of Life that he received from Chiara and which expresses the attitude of Fr. Giovanni towards all the people. His was a rich personality, with a special sweetness, he was always ready to listen, with words that went



straight to the heart. He had a way of representing himself that was appreciated by everyone especially by the youth.

A focalarina who knew him since the '60s wrote: «He was a man of God. And this made it possible for anyone experiencing moments of doubt or darkness to run to him, he who knew how to welcome everyone. With humility and his silent and discrete bearing, Fr. Giovanni, with his wisdom

and his love and faithfulness to God, was able to reach many existential peripheries. One was attracted and came to him because in him, as Isaiah said, the Lord shined forth. The colloquio with him, was life».

Bruno Cantamessa

Maria do Carmo Sousa

«Only He will help us to win»

Maria do Carmo was the first volunteer in her small city, Torres Novas in Portugal. Educated with Christian values, she had a great

love for God and for the Church. She started to work quite young. She married Candido, and they tried their best to give their children love and faith. She met the Movement through her elder children - two of her daughters are focalinarinas - participating in 1973 in her first Mariapolis. There she found a spirituality that filled all her aspirations. She started to give life to the small but growing community in her territory and until she could, she personally distributed the Word of Life.

Discrete, joyful and with great simplicity, she easily created the family with everyone and she truly treasured and gave value to every personal relationship. She loved the young people,



her house as always open; in the simplicity of daily life, in the family, in the parish, wherever she was, she transmitted her union with God.

She never stopped thanking Him because Chiara had taught her to open her heart and to love concretely. Marked by many sufferings, including the death of her first-born son, in the love for Jesus Forsaken, Maria always found the strength to go ahead, and in the family she always tried to maintain the harmony among

everyone, helping each one to overcome difficult moments.

She wrote to one of her daughters: «May God give you a great love for Jesus, because He is the only one who helps us to win over the struggles in this life». Her smile and shining eyes reflected her soul. She left peacefully on February 20 at 92 years old. That morning she had asked Jesus to come and get her.

M. Teresa Guedes

Paolo Paolucci

Righteous in the biblical sense

Paolo left us on February 26 at 64 years old, committed in the New Families, he gave, together with his wife Beatrice, a witness of faith, of reciprocal giving to the others and to the Church.

He wrote his own life story in 2008, as he was preparing himself to take the road of permanent deacon. Married in '77, he continued his biography in the plural form «because all that I do is shared intimately with Beatrice». To Jesi «we came to know the Focolare Movement, where the brother is a Jesus to love».

With their sons Carlo and Mauro they settle in Cava de' Tirreni (zone of Naples), where Paolo is employed as the administrator in a construction site and from 1999 he worked in a ceramics enterprise. He shared: «We make every effort to live and make the spirituality of unity grow in our city... we feel that faith is not a personal matter, but that it must be lived in a communitarian way». They commit themselves in carrying out preparatory courses before marriage for young couples, they participate in the activities of the Pastoral Care for Families. «This is because – he said – we firmly believe that the unity in the family is the basis of every other ... and that the Church must be a family for the families. [...] In 2005, when I was already getting ready to peacefully spend the last remaining years at work life had a surprise for me that was not at all pleasant. I was diagnosed with a tumour in one kidney. We try to understand this, with the light of our faith, to see what the Lord wants to tell us with this new



trial». And still: «From my illness I have gathered unimaginable effects; a new relationship with my family where the unity among everyone has been strengthened, a reaffirmation of our conjugal union with Beatrice, experiencing first-hand that which we had promised one another in the sacrament of matrimony (faithfulness through good and bad times), finding once again brothers who are near to you in your time of

need. All this are the hundredfold that the Lord has always promised us».

His doctor wrote in the Diocesan newspaper «Fermento» that he had always admired Paolo «for his faith that was never shouted out, never over the top, always convinced, lived and borne witness to... he was a man who was perfectly righteous in the biblical sense... ». The Word of Life that Chiara gave him was: «Here I am, I come to do your will» (Heb, 10,9).

Bruno Cantamessa

Elena Veca

a family Church

Elena departed at the end of December 2013. She met the spirituality in Scicli, Sicily, together with her husband Gaetano in '67, when they relocated due to work. It was the year of the foundation of the New Families Movement; she was among the first to launch herself in this new adventure, where she remained faithful for the rest of her life. In '72 they move to Catania, they contact the focolare and they become the bringers of the evan-

Ellen Zaldarriaga

«Jesus takes on himself what we are not»

Ellen, a volunteer of Manila (Philippines), went back to the Father on November 21, 2014, at 70 years old. She was married with three children, when she met the Ideal in '84. She was a teacher for many years, and the parents of her students called her the «miracle worker», because she was always able to arouse in the children, even in the least motivated, the joy of going to school and of learning. The Word of Life she received from Chiara was «Your Word, Lord, is a lamp unto my



feet and a light unto my path» [cfr Psalms 119 (118), 105] helped her to be a witness of the Gospel.

In the nucleo, she followed each volunteer like a mother would. Thoughtful, punctual, well-dressed and organized, she gave a depth and freshness to each meeting. When she was diagnosed with an incurable illness, after the shock, she showed an extraordinary serenity and peace. Ellen embraced Jesus Forsaken and abandoned herself to the Will of the Father, facing many painful treatments. One of her prayers: «Take this yoke and I will follow You wherever you will lead me», was a source of her strength, together with the unity of the family of the Opera. In the two years in which it seemed that her illness was overcome Ellen went back to teaching, bringing the love of God to all those around her. When her health condition allowed her, she participated in the meetings and her presence was a real gift. Towards the end she confided: «Now I understand what we are, what is important. What is important is what we are not because Jesus will take upon himself everything... And we are no longer ourselves».

Miranda Jansen

gelical life for the families in the territory, becoming the point of reference for many. «We are still moved by their faithfulness to the communion of goods». the families who can bear witness to the love received from Elena are numerous: «She was always ready to listen, to take on all the sufferings and make them her own. She had the charity that St. Paul spoke of, that "covers everything, hopes everything, endures everything ..."». «Elena was like the "telephone friend" for many of us, she had words that gave peace. She always shared with us her profound love for and gratitude to Chiara, and her deep relationship with God». In the final period, even if she was sick, when she would receive the news of the illness of a young girl and of her father, she would telephone them regularly, even during the last days of her life. Just up to a few years ago, she together with her husband were in charge of the meetings for young people who were preparing for marriage, bearing witness to the freshness of love in a marriage lived in a Christian way. Elena took from the hands of God the deep sufferings she experienced, transforming them into occasions to love. At the death of her daughter Rosetta she said: «It is God who teaches me to live the present moment: if I am out of it I cannot withstand it; I am starting to understand what it means to be in the Will of God in every». Whoever has known Elena and Gaetano attest: «Looking at them I see the words of John Paul II realized: "Family, be what you should be" and he was thinking of a family Church, open».

Marcella Calascibetta

Our relatives

The following passed on to the Next Life: **the father of Juliana de Castro Fonseca**, focolarina in Brasilia; **Maria Gertrudes, mother of Odete (Luce) Subtil Correia** and **Maria de Matos, mother of Emília (Mila) Martins**, focolarinas at the Mariapolis Arco-iris (Portugal); **the mother of Antonio Coccoluto**, focolarino in Loppiano and **Maria, mother of Hung - Lau Kwok John**, focolarino in Loppiano; **Rosanna, sister of Alfonso Di Nicola**, focolarino in the Roman Mariapolis; **Sr. Monica, sister of Maddalena Schilgen** and **Agnes, sister of Margaret (Callove) Tam**, focolarinas in the Roman Mariapolis; **Maria Felicia, mother of Rosa Mafalda**, focolarina in Bari; **Helena, mother of Marjeta Bobnar**, focolarina in Vancouver (Canada); **Roswita, mother of Stefanie Wintergerste**, married focolarina in Switzerland..

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14 April. **On the cover.** Animators of the youth for a
united world in Castel Gandolfo at the end of march.

Ai sensi del D. lgs. N. 196/2003 per la tutela dei dati personali, comunichiamo che gli indirizzi dei nominativi a cui viene inviato Mariapoli fanno parte dell'archivio del Notiziario Mariapoli, gestito da PAFOM, esclusivamente per la finalità dell'invio di tale periodico. I dati possono essere comunicati a terzi incaricati per la spedizione.