

Press Release – October 15, 2015

The Synod of Bishops, one of the best fruits of the Second Vatican Council

The Focolare Movement will participate in the commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the Synod of Bishops.

Paul VI's deep words and motivation that accompanied the institution of the Synod of Bishops on September 15, 1965 are very dear and meaningful to the Focolare Movement.

Maria Voce welcomed with great joy Cardinal Baldisseri's invitation to participate in the commemoration of 50th anniversary of the Synod of Bishops, to be held at the Vatican, on Saturday, October 17, in the presence of Pope Francis and the participants of the Synod currently taking place on the vocation and mission of the family. She spoke of this occasion as an opportunity to show her appreciation for this institution, which she described as *"one of the best fruits of the Second Vatican Council and a turning point in the implementation of communion and collegiality in leading the universal Church"*.

The President of the Focolari continued to say that her participation, together with a delegation from the Movement, also signifies *"thanksgiving to God for this institution in the Church, a means to support the spirit of communion that unites the Bishops with Pope and among themselves and to make the Church always more effective in carrying out its universal mission"*.

The Focolare Movement, born from the charism of unity of its founder Chiara Lubich, feels that the church's journey as expressed by Paul VI in *Apostolica Sollicitudo*, is inherent in its DNA. In this Apostolic letter, issued when the Synod of Bishops was instituted, Paul VI said: *"The Apostolic concern leading us to carefully survey the signs of the times and to make every effort to adapt the means and methods of the holy apostolate to the changing circumstances and needs of our day, impels us to establish even closer ties with the bishops in order to strengthen our union with them, whom the Holy Spirit has placed.... to rule the Church of God"*.

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