

## IN COMMUNION

Communion – an expression of the spirituality of unity

If “unity” is the key word that describes what is at the heart of the Focolare spirituality, then the experience of communion is its practical realisation; this is the way that all those who want to live this spirituality of unity put it into practice in their everyday lives. This means trying to build relationships of communion with other people. Giving freely of yourself without expecting anything in return becomes a way of life both in small things and in the greater challenges of life.

Chiara Lubich often said that unity is both a sign and a solution for these times when nationalism and globalisation are developing alongside one another with serious negative consequences for all of society. In 1995, when being awarded the UELCI Prize, she said that the spirituality of unity emphasises the value of our neighbour:

*(...) From the very beginning, the Holy Spirit has urged our movement to be directed towards our neighbour. According to the spirituality of unity, you go to God through your neighbour.*

*We say “I-my neighbour-God.” You go to God with others, with your brother or sister; in fact, you go to God through your neighbour.”<sup>1</sup>*

When Pope Francis visited the Focolare’s little town of Loppiano in May 2018, he also referred to this communitarian dimension. He said that this must extend beyond the Focolare and even the Church and open up to all human frontiers. The Holy Father spoke about the “mystical us” on that occasion.

*“The charism of unity is a stimulus and powerful aid in living out this “mystical us” to which scripture refers: it helps us to journey through life together now as people of “one heart and one soul.” (cf. Acts 4:32) and to discover and to truly love one another as “members of one another.” (cf. Rom. 12:5)*

Jesús Morán, philosopher and Co president of the Focolare Movement said:

*“We know that this “we” is not a mass of people with no identity; it is the result of truly living those words of St. Paul “You are one in Christ Jesus.” (Gal. 3:28) The “we” to which Pope Francis refers is not the “group” - a standardised collection of people which is just a sociological concept. The “we” is a Person - Jesus in the midst - in whom each person finds their place and fulfilment.”*

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<sup>1</sup> Chiara Lubich, Address given at the UELCI Awards Ceremony for the author of the year, Milan, March 1995 .