

**“Be the bridge”
120 young people committed to be “bridges” of fraternity
meet in Jerusalem
from April 24 to May 2, 2013**

A delegation from 20 countries represents tens of thousands of young people from all over the world.

Three months away from World Youth Day, this event prepares the youth of the Focolare Movement for the appointment with the Pope at Rio De Janeiro.

They have chosen Jerusalem, where for eight days they want to “Be the bridge” through an event that concludes the year of the Genfest, a meeting held in Budapest from August 31 to September 2, 2012, bringing together 12,000 young people from all over the globe.

During their stay in the Holy Land, a country of contrasts and divisions but an essential hub for a future of peace, the 120 young people will walk “in the footsteps of Jesus” whilst visiting the fascinating sites on this land. They will also participate in academic and interreligious events to experience unity and harmony as obligatory paths to peace. Very significant events are the “Forum on Universal Brotherhood” to be held at Bethlehem University where Muslim and Christian speakers will take part, the meeting with the Mayor of Vera Baboun, and the interreligious symposium at Jerusalem, where Rabbi Ron Kronish, director of ICCI (Interreligious Coordinating Council in Israel) will participate.

Other important events will be the meeting with the locals, including members of the Focolare, committed for quite a long time to sow seeds of brotherhood in situations of hatred and conflict, and the concert to be held at the Jewish Polytechnic in Haifa on April 29. The two musical groups, Gen Rosso and Gen Verde will be giving their performance, including two groups of young Arab and Jewish artists from various cities in the region where they have organised workshops with school children.

The main event will take place on May 1 with a flashmob and a march for peace from Jaffa Gate, Jerusalem to Mount Gethsemane. Thousands of young people from all over the world will participate in this programme through direct streaming and live two-way link-ups with **Loppiano (FI)**, the small town that has always been linked to the history of the youth of the Focolare Movement and which will host 3000 young people from all over Italy, **Mumbai**, the road to interreligious dialogue and **Budapest**, where Dr. Miklós Réthelyi, President of the National Commission of UNESCO will join the young Hungarians to greet all participants.

United World Week, the annual event organised by Youth for a United World since 1996, will start from here. This is the tip of the iceberg of their commitment to promote unity and peace at all levels, a commitment to answer Pope Francis’ appeal to youth: “Do not let yourselves be robbed of hope” and a step towards World Youth Day 2013 at Rio di Janeiro.

Umberta Fabris (+39) 348 8563347

Benjamim Ferreira (+39) 348 4754063