

IDEA OF THE MONTH

March 2023

Loving others fills our hearts with warmth and light

The beauty of our lives is seen in our love and in our capacity to be a gift to others and to society even if we feel inadequate, aware of our limitations and dragged down by external circumstances.

But how do we overcome the uncertainties that sometimes seem overwhelming and make us close in on ourselves and withdraw into our private sphere? How do we avoid focussing only on our own interests and forgetting about the people around us by remaining indifferent before the common good and the needs of humanity?

As Chiara Lubich taught us, every man and woman can make his or her contribution in all fields of human activity - in science, art, politics, education and health care - by listening to the voice of his or her conscience.

And it will be precisely our conscience that will rekindle the flame of love in our hearts, and we will have new eyes with which to look around us and see the area where we live or work and our friendship groups in a different way and recognise that we can give something to our neighbour. We will know that the love of a single person can make a big impact upon society. It brings hope and strengthens social ties, especially when natural and medical disasters cause pain and exacerbate poverty. At such times, we find allies in people who share this love.

Jun who lives in the Philippines recounts that at the height of the pandemic, a community he knows was devastated by fire and many families lost everything: "Even though we are poor, my wife Flor and I really wanted to help. I told the members of the motorcycle group to which I belong about this situation even though I knew they too were struggling as much as we were. This did not stop my friends from taking action; we collected tins of sardines and packets of noodles, rice and other food that we donated to the victims of the fires.

Often, my wife and I feel discouraged at the thought of what the future may hold, but even though we are not rich, we believe in the power of love and that we always have something to share."

By loving others, we draw on that inexhaustible source of energy that is the human heart which urges us to give of ourselves without hesitation and with commitment. It impels us to offer our time and sometimes even share the small or large resources we have at our disposal.

We always experience that in giving we also receive so much from all those with whom we share this wonderful adventure. This is a valuable source of help and always gives us hope and helps us to be even more generous to all.

It is true that when we are able to love others and attend to their needs and wants, it is as if we turn on a light in a darkened room. This light brightens our lives and the lives of

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others and warms our existence, creating that current of reciprocity that brings warmth and joy.

And we will no longer be alone in loving but others will be with us.

THE IDEA OF THE MONTH, based on the Word of Life of the Focolare Movement, was born in Uruguay as part of the dialogue between people of different convictions, whose motto is "building dialogue". The purpose of this publication is to help promote the ideal of universal fraternity. The IDEA OF THE MONTH is currently translated into 12 languages and distributed in more than 25 countries.