

Our life, our dreams, our love....



As a result of the Coronavirus outbreak and most European countries being in 'imposed quarantine', it was in fact, one of the last gatherings there before the Government requested an end to non-essential travel and to group meetings. I must admit that, despite concerns and the fact that the whole situation is overwhelming, I am delighted that our get together went ahead. Married couples don't often have time to deepen their relationships. Marriage is one of the most beautiful sacraments, however, 'being for each other', when our lives are often 'task orientated', is actually quite hard.

The inspiration for the weekend was taken from Chiara's Lubich meditation "to embroider patterns of light on the crowd", exploring how the presence of Jesus in the Midst between the couple is a new light which, transforms their relationship, their family and wider society. Everything was grounded in the day to day realities and experiences of those who presented, in such a way that was very accessible but also inspiring and challenging.

During the weekend, we had many opportunities, with the 30 other people present, to enrich our lives by sharing many experiences; each one of them relevant, deep and personal.

One of my favourite parts was a moment when we had to describe our spouses using 3-5 words (The Desert Island game). It was great to read what our other halves wrote about us and explore ways in which our relationship could grow. The highlight of our Saturday programme was 50th wedding anniversary of a lovely (I'm not sure I would say lovely - I think what they are is more complex than 'lovely') Scottish couple who wanted to spend this special moment with us. What an amazing journey they have been on!

Sunday's session focussed mainly on more practical ways in which we, individually and

collectively, link up and impact our communities. The so called 'ripple effect' has helped us hugely to understand that we are all called to do our bit to build happier and healthier neighbourhoods.

Against the current backdrop of chaos and uncertainty, the weekend was a moment that shone out with the light of the Charism of Unity, filling each of us with the 'antivirus of hope!'

What a gift this weekend has been! I hope that we will have a chance to do it again soon!

Michal Siewniak