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Francis Gives 3 Guidelines to Focolare Movement

Urges Them to Grow in Contemplation, Evangelization

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Rome, September 26, 2014 (Zenit.org) Staff Reporter | 867 hits

Pope Francis is encouraging members of the Focolare Movement to grow in the spirit of contemplation, of "going out" in evangelization, and to form men and women in a school of humanity.

The Holy Father offered these three ideas during an address he gave this morning to members of the movement participating in its general assembly.

The Pontiff praised Focolare, or "Mary's Work," as a gift "born in the heart of the Catholic Church from a small seed that, in the course of the years, has given life to a tree which now spreads its branches in all the expressions of the Christian family and also among members of different religions and among many who cherish justice and solidarity together with the search for truth."

He said that the movement flowed from a gift of the Spirit, the "charism of unity that the Father wishes to give to the Church and to the world."

After mentioning with gratitude the founder, Chiara Lubich, Francis said he wanted to propose three main ideas to the Focolare members: to contemplate, to go out, and to school.

New humanity

Speaking of contemplation, he said that it is a need today more than ever, "to contemplate God and the wonders of His love, to dwell in Him, who in Jesus came to pitch His tent among us" and also to "live in the company of brothers and sisters, to break with them the Bread of communion and fraternity."

"Contemplation that leaves others outside is a deception," he said, citing Evangelii Gaudium.

"To realize this," the Pope explained, "it is necessary to widen one's interiority to the measure of Jesus and of the gift of His Spirit, to make contemplation the indispensable condition for a solidaristic presence and an effective action, which is truly free and pure."

Secondly, the Pontiff spoke of the idea of "going out," an idea that he called "very important because it expresses the movement of evangelization."

"To go out as Jesus went out from the bosom of the Father to proclaim the Word of love to all, to the point of giving himself on the wood of the cross."

He said we must learn "to communicate the love of God generously to all," and to do this, "we must become experts in that art that is called "dialogue" and that is not learned cheaply."

"He [Jesus] awaits us in the trials and groaning of our brothers, in the wounds of society and in the questions of the culture of our time," Francis said.

And he warned against losing sense of the priority in sharing the Good News: "One is sick at heart when, in face of a Church, of a humanity with so many wounds, moral wounds, existential wounds, war wounds, which we all feel every day, to see Christians beginning to engage in philosophical, theological and spiritual 'Byzantinisms,' what is useful instead is an outgoing spirituality. [...] Today we have no right to Byzantine reflection. We must go out! Because – I have said it other times – the Church seems like a field hospital. And when one goes to a field hospital, the first task is to cure the wounds, not to analyse the level of cholesterol ... that comes later. Is this clear?"

Finally, the Pontiff referred to John Paul II's "Novo Millennio Ineunte" and the invitation to "the whole Church to become 'house and school of communion.'"

"As the Gospel exacts," he said, "we must form new men and women and, necessary to this end, is a school of humanity to the measure of the humanity of Jesus. In fact, He is the new



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On ZENIT's Web page:

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