

MARIAPOLI

Newsletter "Mariapoli" n. 01 – February 2023

Greetings to all from the International Center of the Focolare Movement!



This is **the first of four newsletters that you will receive this year with the title "Mariapolis"**, a name that we know very well and that for years, in the form of a newsletter, has brought news of the Movement into our homes. We have chosen to keep it because it means family, sharing, communion, fellowship, to which we also add openness and transparency. This first series of newsletters **aims in particular to give us information and to encourage dialogue** on a topic that concerns us all: **the integral sustainability - current and future - of the Movement**. As we have said several times, the Movement itself is actively involved in and facing the challenges of our time. We also offer multimedia content that you can use as insights for your meetings, if you wish.

You will receive the **next newsletter in May**, but we will have another appointment before that, at the Link-Up on March 11. We hope you enjoy reading it.

Stefania Tanesini

Margaret Karram: Make every crisis an opportunity

When she met last December with the collaborators of the International Center, the President, Margaret Karram, focused on the main reasons for a major work of economic and organizational review which began a few months ago. She referred to what Pope Francis had said to the participants in the Assembly, in February 2021, when he stressed that we must live this crisis as an opportunity for growth. She said, "We believe that this is a time in which the Holy Spirit is acting. This is my experience in the first two years of my presidency: to believe that the Holy Spirit is prompting us to be more up to date without getting discouraged in the face of human complexity and its contradictions. This is our mandate."

February 2021.
Pope Francis meets with participants in the General Assembly of the Focolare Movement.

"Every crisis is a call to new maturity; it is a time of the Spirit, which arouses the need to perform an update, without becoming discouraged in the face of human complexity and its contradictions".



[Watch the video](#)

[Read the Pope's text of 6.2.2021](#)

Margaret also quoted a page of Chiara Lubich's diary of September 8, 1970, the feast of the Nativity of Mary, which is significant for the times we are living now.



“

Indeed, only if we are ready and –what’s more – only if we truly want to put aside the Work that we have built up and leave it for someone else to continue; only if we are ready to see it die momentarily, just like the grain of wheat from whose death life springs forth in abundance, are we one, because to be so, we must possess God alone.

”

[Read Chiara’s Diary of 8.9.1970](#)

A bit of history: a key word - discernment

An in-depth analysis of the global economy of the Movement began in September 2021. The continuous trend of the economic deficit showed no signs of reversing in the near future. It therefore required immediate action. Even in economic narrowness God wants to tell us something: it is a call for us to cooperate to take concrete steps and make the Charism alive today and be ready and able to respond to the call and to the needs of the world today and in the future.

A working group called “VEO”, *Visione Economica dell’Opera* (Economic Vision of the Movement - EVM) has been established which has identified seven areas of work: four concerning various aspects related to communion of goods, providence, projects and fundraising; three concerning areas for reorganizing, including at the International Center, the little towns and some of the numerous “works” and social activities of the Movement.



Balance Sheet of Communion

Rome, January 19th 2023. At the Focolare Meeting Point the Communion in action: a lifestyle of sharing a comprehensive document that is useful for everyone to live and walk together towards the realisation of unity and fraternity.

[Watch the video in Italian](#)

[Read the translated text of 19.1.2023](#)

Updating of the charism and the Economic Vision of the Movement (EVM)

The objective of the “EVM” working group is **to contribute to the integral sustainability of the Movement**: charismatic, human, ecological and economic. The economic one, in fact, is only one step, albeit a fundamental one, on the path that the Focolare are following to ensure we can reach all the goals of the Movement, and thus give our contribution as a response to the "cry of humanity, of the new generations and of creation".¹

This requires not only a cultural action, but in many cases also structural and organizational change. Therefore: **sustainability, reorganization, subsidiarity**, are the main commitments on which we are working in a network between the Center and the Zones.

¹ 2021 Focolare Movement General Assembly Final Document – “The Courage to Embrace the World”

The working group: “steering committee” of EVM

The “steering committee” is made up of several members of the General Council of the Focolare with the help of two consultants.



Steering Committee

It is a group made up of members of the General Council. The President, with the consent of General Council, delegates responsibility to the Steering Committee to follow the progress of the EVM program.

M. Angels Capellas
IV dialogue Center

Salvo D'Orto, OMI
Religious Center

Silvia Escandell
Opera Center

Noreen Lockhart
Focolarine Center

Giovanni Salerno
New Families Secretariat

Genevieve Sanze
Opera Center

Klaus Bruschke
Opera Center

Antonio Salimbeni
Opera Center

Oswaldo Barreneche
Dialogue with Contemporary Culture

Gianni Salerno, Italian, co-responsible for the New Families Movement and coordinator of the group; Silvia Escandell, Argentinian, central delegate of the Focolare; Noreen Lockhart, Scottish, responsible for the focolarine; Geneviève Sanze, of the Central African Republic, economist and co-responsible of the Communion of Goods, Economy and Work aspect; Maria Àngels Capellas, Spanish, co-responsible for the Dialogue with people of non religious beliefs; Oswaldo Barreneche, Argentinian, historian and co-responsible for the Dialogue with Contemporary Culture; P. Salvo D’Orto, Italian, responsible for the Religious adherents of the Focolare; Klaus Brüsckhe, Brazilian, co-responsible for the Outreach and Apostolate aspect and Antonio Salimbeni, Italian, co-

responsible for the Center for Interreligious Dialogue. Vincenzo Labriola, Italian and IT project manager at the International Focolare Center is the group's program manager and Matt Driver, English, brings his professional experience as a coach and consultant to organizations.

The steps to be taken in this phase

Let's start by focusing on the International Center.

The challenge before us now is to **redefine the structure of the International Center** taking into account the "epochal change" to say it with the words of Pope Francis and the need to achieve integral sustainability, ensuring that it is increasingly at the service of the Movement in the different geographical areas of the world.

Since January, an analysis and review of the services and some of the branches and wide-ranging movements has begun in a work of great involvement. The aim of this work is to achieve the full sustainability of the Centre and a review of its service to the Focolare communities in the world today, taking into account the purpose for which it was founded.

In fact, the "vocation" of the International Centre is to express the unity and universality of the Movement, to safeguard and always make accessible the heritage of the charism; to support, develop and accompany realities and initiatives of a general nature.

In the zones a review of the distribution of focolares has been continuing for several years, evaluating the priorities in the different geographical areas also as a result of the reduced number of men and women focolarini who live in the focolare. Instead, at the International Center, this work is at the beginning. The General Assembly of 2014 had already recognised the need to streamline the organization of the Center, providing for forms of decentralization and remote collaboration as we were already aware of the impossibility of supporting its current costs.

Acronyms

EVM *Economic Vision of the Movement*

ASC *Update and simplification of the International Centre of the Focolare Movement*

CIS *Steering and Support Committee for the sustainability of the little towns and works of the Work*

What has been done so far

In addition to the work of the steering committee and the committees dealing with the most urgent areas of action, starting in September 2022 **an information campaign** was launched of which this newsletter is also part, and which aims to guarantee continuous information that offers everyone the possibility to interact, dialogue, make proposals and receive explanations on the economic review process of the Focolare Movement. So far, the EVM steering committee has met with and informed the General Council of the Focolare, the zone delegates and the collaborators of the International Center. You can contact us at this address: veocomitatoguida@focolare.org we are at your disposal for questions, suggestions, sharing.

Gianni Salerno
VEO Steering Committee Coordinator

To gain awareness: some contributions

You'll find below the links to some talks, answers or dialogues that can help us to acquire greater awareness and a broader and more complete vision of the time we are living both as a Movement and as humanity.



Mgr. Matteo Visioli
*undersecretary of the
Dicastery for the
Doctrine of the Faith*

After the founder: a plant that lives, grows and bears fruit

the editorial staff of the link-up interviewed Mgr Matteo Visioli
Here are some excerpts from the interview.

[Watch the video](#)



Eva Gullo e Alberto Frassinetti:

Insights on Co-responsibility in Organizations at the Service of a Charism

[Watch the video](#)