

Pope Francis encourages the Focolare Movement to continue our mission in the world

Trust, openness, gratitude are the words with which the President of the Focolare Movement Maria Voce and the Co-President Jesús Morán summarize the meeting with Pope Francis during the private audience of September 2, 2019. “Bring ahead the prophecies of Chiara” was the encouragement of the Pope.



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Maria Voce: We have just come from the audience with the Pope. It was a beautiful meeting – a meeting of extraordinary cordiality. We had brought him a book of Chiara’s link-ups as a gift; he really appreciated it and looked at it with care. We also gave him an icon of Mary called “Joy of all the Afflicted”. He loved both the title and the icon itself because he said that it was new to him and that seeing the images of people who were suffering and were going towards Mary reminded him of the last pages of Manzoni’s book where all the lepers in the hospital pray to Mary and invoke her in their affliction.

The whole meeting was marked by great trust, by great openness. He kept saying, “Go ahead, go ahead” – he will have repeated it a thousand times. He thanked us for the good we do and we felt that he was really happy to see us.

He also said, “Pray for me,” and so we assured him that we were praying.

At a certain point I said to him: “Everyone is praying today because the whole Movement knows that we are here with you and everyone is praying for this meeting – not only the Catholics but everyone.” He extended his arms as if to include everyone who prayed. It was very beautiful.

Jesús Morán: Very beautiful. I think it was a meeting marked by mutual love because he kept saying to us, “Thank you for what you are doing – go ahead,” and we kept saying, “We support what you do; we defend your ideas.” I immediately thought of Chiara’s experience when she went to Paul VI who told her, “Everything is possible here.”

Everything really is possible there. We will have to see concretely but he told us, “Go ahead, carry ahead all that Chiara foresaw,” because then we talked about many things, even practical ones.

Maria Voce: He continued to say how upset he is at seeing there is nationalism, obstacles to peace and conflict even among our own people. He said: “Even in the bosom of the Church (there are) some who think differently. Why do we not learn from history?” “I have cried,” he said, “I cry when I hear certain statements against peace and against mutual understanding.”

Jesús Morán: He was very sad because certain conflicts continue to cause death. He said, “Is it possible that we have learned nothing from the bloody wars we have experienced?” He seemed worried when we talked about Europe. We told him about the European Mariapolis. First of all, we talked about Chiara’s Centenary and he appreciated what we said. He understood that this will not be a commemoration of the past because we feel that Chiara’s charism is truly relevant today.

Maria Voce: One thing we felt is that he cares deeply about priests, members of religious communities and bishops. He cares in the very sense of saying, “Help us in this”.