

*To all the members of the Focolare Movement in France*

Rocca di Papa, March 29, 2022

Dear everyone,

Tomorrow, the 30<sup>th</sup> of March, there will be the publication of the Independent Inquiry conducted by GCPS Consulting concerning the cases of abuse causing harm to children and young people by JMM and – we have to say this with great pain – not only by him, as is clear from the results of the inquiry.

The team of people who conducted the investigation has concluded, in a professional and competent way, a task that has taken more than a year and today offers to the Focolare Movement in France, and in the whole world, a result that cannot fail to cause us great pain, shame and remorse.

With this letter we want to speak, first and foremost to the victims of abuse by JMM and to other victims who are among us, within our family. Every thought and feeling of ours goes to those who have suffered a profoundly serious crime that in many cases has ruined their lives. No words can adequately express the shock and pain that we are experiencing because of all this.

The victims reported that they experienced various levels of aggression and abuse, leaving them with very deep wounds. We are profoundly grateful to the victims because you have had the courage to speak out. To all of you, to each and every one of you personally and in the name of the Focolare Movement, we ask FORGIVENESS for the suffering you have experienced, not only at the hands of whoever committed abuse, but also because of our indifference, our lack of vigilance and our lack of understanding.

We invite all the members of the Work of Mary in France to associate themselves with us in this being open to the victims and their families.

This is a particularly important and key moment of our life, in which God is calling us to be able to remain in the trial of the harsh reality which the report puts into light. We can't escape, nor can we look the other way, even if we know that over many decades the charism of unity, has not only had the experience of abuses or attacks on the dignity of people but has also witnessed a lot of life, light and faithfulness, and much self-giving at the service of unity in the Church and in the world.

As well as the shock, humiliation and the suffering brought about by these facts, we are newly determined to condemn unreservedly these actions which are contrary to the principles that animate our Movement and are totally incompatible with the most basic rules of respect and of the integrity of the person.

As Scripture says, “There is a time for everything” (Eccles.3 1-9), and this is the time for purification, to stop and reflect on our errors and re-read our history, in the truth.

We want to understand how a charism that was born for the fullness of relationships could have brought about such damaging situations. Certainly, with the help of the recommendations of the report, we will try to discover the causes and set in motion initiatives in every field to ensure that all of this is never repeated.

Certainly, with the help of the recommendations of the report, we will try to discover the causes and set in action initiatives in every field to ensure that none of this can ever happen again.

We want to be alongside of each one of you, disarmed, and with our only desire being to contribute, as far as we are able, to the process of healing the wounds of each person and of our communities.

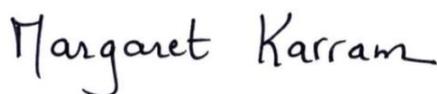
We are aware of your great suffering, which is also ours. We would have wanted all these things never to have happened. And yet, the greatness of the charism tells us that hope is also one of our duties; a hope that does not depend on our merits, on our abilities but on the grace of God.

We assure all of you, members of the Movement in France, of our unity and our affection, our closeness, and our trust in our collective capacity to overcome this difficult trial.

We ask God and Chiara to help us in this new step.



Jesús Morán  
Copresidente



Margaret Karram  
Presidente