

CH CONFERENCE CALL

Rocca di Papa, 18 June 2016 – 8:00 p.m.

- 1. Opening and greetings**
- 2. UWW – diary of a trip to Ecuador**
“I lost a roof, but I gained a starry sky” – intercultural experience with young people from various parts of Europe, Asia and Latin American countries.
- 3. “Holidays – and sharing” - El Espinal (Argentina)**
30 young people and some adults had a different kind of holiday: life, work and rest with the people in that place.
- 4. Taking care of others - Orano and Beni Abbes (Algeria)**
ASIPAA, an association fostering the inclusion of blind and visually impaired people in the workplace, organised by some Muslim ladies.
The experience of Ines Benallal, a Muslim Gen 4.
- 5. Giorgio Marchetti (Fede) – The secret of happiness – Remembering the first year since Chiaretto’s departure for the Heavenly Mariapolis;**
From an answer given by Giorgio Marchetti (Fede) to a Gen 3, Gen 3 School – Castel Gandolfo, 25 May 2013.
- 6. Nairobi (Kenya) – Come and get to know Nairobi with us!**
A short tour of the city with three young people who help us get to know a city with over 5 million inhabitants from all parts of Kenya and 40 different tribes and languages.
- 7. Fighting... for peace in Marsabit (Kenya)**
Johnstone Duba has spent his life building peace so as to overcome long term tribal conflicts and clashes.
- 8. The life of a community at the foot of Mt. Kenya**
*Other people’s needs become our own. At **Embu**, near Nairobi, everyone becomes a friend.*
- 9. Millycent’s story – Nairobi (Kenya)**
Can hope dwell in one of the largest slums in Nairobi?
- 10. Mariapolis Piero (Kenya) – Cultures in dialogue**
Representatives from all across sub-Saharan Africa and Madagascar discussing family values.
- 11. Dialogue with Maria Voce (Emmaus) and Jesús Moran**
- 12. Chiara Lubich: Entering into the other person’s culture**
From an answer given by Chiara to the representatives of the communities in Africa, at Nairobi, 18 May 1992.

13. Conclusion.

1) **OPENING and GREETINGS**

(music)

Raphael: [Greetings in the ngemba, duala and bangwa languages, without translation]
Welcome everyone, to our worldwide family meeting.

Joan: *Jambo Africa!* I'm Joan, I'm from Kenya and I'm very happy to be here with you.

Raphael: I'm Raphael from Cameroon. I was born 45 km from Fontem. I too am happy to spend this time with all of you who are linked up in many parts of the world.

Joan: In fact, if we wanted to give a title to this Conference Call, it would be Africa: "Jambo Africa". A big hello to the whole of Africa!

Here in the hall, we have a big group of people from many African countries, or people who have lived there. Let's greet them! (Applause)

Raphael: Here there are also members of an international commission who are meeting in these days for the first time in Rome, to set up specific projects in relation to some of the major conflicts and wars going on.

This morning we received a letter from Amman, Jordan. It is signed by Wael Suleiman, Director of Caritas Jordan, who handles the reception of hundreds of thousands of refugees who arrive there from Iraq, Syria and Palestine.

Among other things, Wael writes: "Life does not have meaning anymore for anyone in the Middle East ... Darkness everywhere ... Fear ... Death ... Hatred ... Refugees .. Camps ... But the Ideal that keeps us going, beyond all this, is to discover every day that God is still there, and he is love, and he loves us immensely ... that love is stronger."

Here with us is Omar Abawi from Jordan who is taking part in the international commission on peace, contributing in particular in regard to peace in the Middle East. We are glad to have you with us Omar! (Applause) Bring our greetings and our support to everyone. Thank you all.

Let's also say hello to the young people in Poland who are working very hard to prepare the World Youth day in Krakow where 2 million young people are expected from 26th-31st July. Many of us will go to Krakow. So see you there!

Here nearby at Castel Gandolfo there is the annual meeting of the collaborators of Città Nuova (Italian New City Magazine) that started 60 years ago. On the screen you can see the first issue which came out on the 14th July 1956. Emmaus and Jesus, I know you would like say hello to them.

Jesús: We really do want to say hello to tell all of you who are there at Castel Gandolfo that this work within the Movement, the first work (within the Movement) is truly very important. It always has been and perhaps it is even more so today, because we all know that we are living in

times of globalisation and internationalisation, to use concepts that are so important. As a charism we have an answer which is “may they all be one” the “*ut omnes*”! This is our cultural project.

Now we know very well that putting something out on the internet, or spreading an idea or something that has been lived through the internet or all media or through channels of information, is something very significant, it can be decisive for people. It may be a concrete experience of “may they all be one”: an idea that is shared among millions of people, which circulates through means of communication is already an experience of “all one”. So on this 60th anniversary, we know it is not an easy time for publishers or journalists but we would like to encourage you, to encourage your work and say that we are with you, that you are very important to us. (Applause)

Emmaus: I too want to say a big hello, and best wishes! First I would like to thank Citta' Nuova for all that it has been and all that it has done over these 60 years. It has truly been a valuable support to the Movement. I thank you also in the name of the whole Movement which has benefited from your work, of course!

Then I would like to encourage you as you go ahead, encourage you to always be witnesses, witnesses to a light which comes from above, a light which comes from God, which comes from the gift of the charism – and has nothing to do with all the opinions in this world, with all the fashions and ideas that circulate in the world – but must say what it wants to say courageously, frankly, holding fast to the truth, the truth which frees us from any kind of conditioning, even though sometimes means taking risks. So take courage, let's keep going ahead together and let's take risks together so as to give witness to the charism. Best wishes and good work!

Jesús: Thank you (Applause)

Raphael: Thank you Emmaus, thank you Jesus!

Let's go on with our greetings to people who are linked up. Yesterday I was able to take a phone call from Caracas in Venezuela. Let's listen to it.

Raphael: Hello Arellis? I'm Raphael, I'm glad we're able to call you. We know that your country is going through a very difficult time and we feel very close to you right now. We wanted to hear from you how you are living this situation.

Arellis (in Spanish): Yes. In recent months our situation here in Venezuela - food shortages, shop lootings and widespread violence - has worsened and now reaches all sectors of society.

Despite everything there is a great deal of sharing amongst everyone. We share what we have, with many different experiences.

For example, in one neighbourhood a house belonging to one of us has become the collection point where people come and ask for help. There is always something to give, even medicines we received from Providence.

We experience the vitality and beauty of the first Christian communities today. It's a constant return to the origins, to the experience of Chiara and her first companions, it's tangible.

We take this opportunity to thank you for all the help that you are sending us.

Raphael: Thank you again! We are with you all! (Applause)

Tomorrow, on the island of Crete, the Holy and Great Synod of the Orthodox Church will begin. This is the first time, after 1200 years, that most of the Orthodox Churches are meeting together,

despite the difficulties. We pray wholeheartedly for this Synod and we assure them our spiritual closeness.

2. UWW. DIARY OF A JOURNEY TO EQUADOR

Raphael: Now let's move on. Maruska and Leandro have some news for us.

Maria: Yes, we would like to tell you about *Link Cultures*.

Leandro: This means connecting cultures.

Maria: This was the title of this year's United World Week. The focus of this world wide event was at Quito, in Ecuador.

Leandro: Despite the earthquake that happened there, which you will remember, the young people in Ecuador decided to go ahead with the United World Week project so as give greater hope to their people.

Maria: Now let's see the audiovisual diary Mariana and Gábor prepared!

(Music)

Speaker: *It's 3 in the morning and Rome is still sleeping. Looking at the starry sky, I remember a phone call with the youth of Ecuador, after the April 16th earthquake: "I lost a roof, but I gained a starry sky".... And I thought of it now as we are about to set off towards that same "starry sky".*

Ecuador. We arrived in Quito. A happy group of enthusiastic people welcomed us.

Young people from various parts of the world have come here to make a journey through the indigenous cultures of this country.

Today this intercultural experience is starting: we are young people from various parts of Europe, Asia and many Latin American countries.

Samiy and Williams, two Kitukara youth, have shared with us the pain and struggle of an ethnic group who had to conceal their cultural traditions because of their indigenous and mixed race origins.

In the coming days we will have the chance to meet some of these ethnic groups.

Off we go! First stop Puyo, a city in east Ecuador, right on the edge of the Amazon forest.

As we travel it is fascinating to discover the different shades of green that nature offers us.

We arrived at the Shiwakucha community

Nadino: *"We're here at Shiwakucha, a Kichwa community. We don't need to make more weapons in the world. We do need to build spaces for dialogue, peace and brotherhood so as to build a world as big as our dreams."*

Speaker: *During these days we will be able to deepen different types of relationships: with ourselves, with others, with the environment, with things and with the transcendent, because the essence of our being is "to be in relationship".*

Our experience these days is to "see the world in another way."

Knowing the Andean culture has made us discover its human and cultural wealth and the wisdom these peoples possess.

Through these meetings we have found the truest thing a person possesses: the ability to relate to others. We are different and this is a chance to start a dialogue.

The [human and cultural] wealth that I have experienced here on the Equator made me discover the wealth that I have within me as a person, the same as you, and the others do ...

respect, solidarity and sharing starts from me: “..I lost a roof, but I gained the stars!” I dived into a sea of cultures and gained a sky full of stars. A dream that can become reality dwells within me: fraternity.

3) “HOLIDAYS – AND SHARING” - EL ESPINAL (ARGENTINA)

Leandro: Holidays with a difference. This is what the young people of Argentina and Paraguay did. Now, we’ll show you the video they sent us.

Cristian (in Spanish): This summer I was invited to take part in a different type of holiday. The goal was to have a “live-in experience with the local community” in a small town in the north of Argentina.

I accepted the invitation, based only on this information, not knowing what was expected of me. We arrived in [a little place] called El Espinal, with a population of 300. It is surrounded by rivers, hills and the people live a very simple life: they are farmers, bee keepers and weavers.

Sol Wamba (in Spanish): There were about 30 of us young people, as well as a group of men and women focolarini. We found ourselves spending a few days together with this community.

Magui (in Spanish): We did various activities with them, sharing their daily chores. We worked in the tobacco plantation; we extracted honey from the beehives and cooked “tortillas”. On some days there was Mass and on other days we organised the Liturgy of the Word in which the community participated.

We presented the Golden Rule through a mime which showed how it can be put into practice in daily life.

The most beautiful thing was to do everything in unity. There wasn’t a planned program; our starting point was what people were concerned about and their everyday lives which gradually led to seeing what we would do each day.

Cristian (in Spanish): Since this was also supposed to be a vacation, we spent moments of relaxation in the midst of nature. This gave us the chance to get to know each one better, to chat, play football, watch films and go horse-riding. This reinforced the unity among us and this unity was contagious.

The various inconveniences, such as rain, lack of gas and electricity, helped us to make ourselves one with the reality of the place giving us the possibility to love in a concrete way. Every meeting with the local people brought us closer to getting to know their stories, joys, and sufferings ... they slowly began to express their profound experiences, their wounds, and through our listening, they started to heal. At the same time, we too learnt something with and from them, especially their simplicity and openness.

Joaquin (in Spanish): They were incredibly beautiful days spent with the community, especially in the way they welcomed us. Being here was also a great challenge, and I really hope to come back.

Mercedes (in Spanish): Being able to share with the community was a new experience for me. It meant opening my heart and going out of myself, because being rather shy I sometimes don’t easily reach out to others.

Diego (in Spanish): Since we lived this experience together, I felt as if I was in a Mariapolis where people aren’t put in boxes.

Carla (in Spanish): For me this vacation was a new encounter with God present in the people, with God through the unity that was there, and also with God through tiny gestures and through nature.

Magui (in Spanish): Now that we're back home, through the social networks, we continue to share our daily life even at a distance. The experience we lived was to learn, build and contemplate unity. It was to discover that if we aim at unity all the rest is a gift.

Cristian (in Spanish): Bye! Thank you!

Raphael: Thanks to the young people from Argentina and Paraguay!

4) TAKING CARE OF OTHERS - ORANO AND BENI ABBES (ALGERIA)

Raphael: Now let's go now to Algeria. Two stories in this big country: one from Oran and the other by Benjebes, an oasis in the desert. Our Muslim brothers and sisters are sharing these stories with us.

(Music)

Schéhérazad Mesli (Foundress and Vice President of ASIPAA) (in French): *The first time I came was to run a support program for the French language. And there we realized they had no training. At that point we said, let's create an association for professional integration of blind and visually impaired people.*

Fatema Khariji (Press Laboratory Assistant) (in French): *This is the Braille printer. This is the book which has been printed; with the Braille writing. And the black print writing.*

Mohammed Lahoueli (Vice President of ASIPAA) (in French) (a blind person ed. note): *We turned this centre into a workshop so as to give visually impaired people the practical know-how, which are the main tools they need so as to access the world of work: whether that is information technology, printing, massage therapy and, in the cultural field, theatre and music.*

Thanks to A.M.U. which gave initial support to the association.

Imane Hamani (President of ASIPAA) (in French): *A.M.U. stands for Action¹ for a United World.*

This is the tenth project promoting the use of information technology.

To complete this training the idea of a "cybercafé" came up because it gives the opportunity to play in different ways and to do some research. Then came the formation of the library.

Meanwhile, training in massage and lymphatic drainage therapy began. And at the same time small socio-cultural workshops started: one for singing and one for handcrafts.

Aside from all this, the main activity is trying to integrate them into the working world. The association employs three people and they are paid. The rest of our work is done by volunteers: about ten or fifteen of them. To date, the association has managed to find work for some fifteen young people in different government or private institutions.

The experience of Ines, a 9-year old Gen4 from Beni Abbes (western Sahara)

(Music and shots of the place)

Ines Benallal (in Arabic): *Peace be with you!*

My name is Ines and this is my family: my dad, my mom and my sisters!

One day we all went to the oasis at Tannine. There, I met a little girl who told me that she was not going to school because she has an illness that affects her eyes since there is too much sand in her house.

She even let me ride the donkey!

When we got home, I asked my parents if we could gather clothes, books and toys for them.

And so, a few days later, my father went back to the oasis with some friends, Gino e Jean-Pierre, bringing to them what we were able to collect. (Music and applause)

¹ Lapsus, he said 'Association'

5) **GIORGIO MARCHETTI (FEDE) – THE SECRET OF HAPPINESS**

Raphael: The happiness of this little girl, Ines, helps me to introduce what we will see next. It is of Giorgio Marchetti, Fedè, one of the first focolarini, while he was talking with a group of girls and shared the secret of happiness. Fedè passed away last May 29.

I'm glad to remember Pasquale Foresi, whom we know by the name of Chiaretto. He left us today, one year ago. He was always alongside Chiara in giving life to the Little Towns, like the one at Loppiano in Italy, or near Nairobi, and the publishing houses such as Citta' Nuova.

Fede²: *"... To love, above all to love Jesus Forsaken, is the secret of happiness...*

But what matters is that Jesus has promised us happiness not only in the next life but also in this life, if we love one another as he loved us and if we love Jesus forsaken. So we experience a happiness which is like being in the waiting room of the other life, of eternal life, of eternal happiness.

So now, at my age, I am in the waiting room. Foco said that old age is the novitiate for Paradise. It is getting ready to go there. We must remember this because many people are afraid of death; instead it is the door to heaven. So you might be asking how old I am. Try and guess. Did you say 85, 84? You're nearly right. Just about right, well done! (Applause). So now that you are 84 years old and you have tried to build happiness, are you happy? And my answer is, yes, I am 84 and I am happy!"

Joan: It is a happiness that was visible in Fedè. Thank you Fedè!

6) **NAIROBI (KENYA) – COME AND GET TO KNOW NAIROBI WITH US!**

Joan: So we come to Africa and to Kenya and I am very happy to introduce you to my Country. I invite you to take off your watches and allow yourselves to be carried by time.

Emmaus and Jesus were there in May. At the time various schools of formation were held in Nairobi and we looked at big subjects like the family, inculturation and others which affect the whole continent but we will say more about these soon...

First we would like to tell you some stories... they talk about how things were in the past and the impact of modernity... rivalry between different ethnicities and the hardships of life in the slums and the areas on the outskirts of large cities like Nairobi...

Let's go to Nairobi first, accompanied by three friends.

(Music)

James: *(in Swahili and English) Jambo! [Hello] Karibu Kenya! [Welcome to Kenya] This is Nairobi.*

Lucy: *(in English) The capital of Kenya*

Audrey: *(in Swahili) Karibuni sana! Welcome!*

² From an answer given by Giorgio Marchetti (Fedè) to a Gen 3, Gen 3 School – Castel Gandolfo, 25 May 2013.

James (in English) *In Nairobi we have more than 5 million inhabitants. These are Kenyans coming from all over the country, living here in the city. These people also represent the more than 40 tribes, languages we have in the country. When you walk in the streets you can hear these people speaking all these different languages. What unifies us is our two national languages: Swahili and English.*

Lucy (in English): *This is the first president of Kenya: Jomo Kenyatta. Kenya gained independence in 1963. Kenya is facing international challenges like any other country in the world; in the forefront being terrorism. For example the attacks in Garissa, in Westgate Mall... But we young people are hoping for the future, because we know there is bright future ahead for us.*

Audrey (in English) *This is Masai market. As you can see it is an open-air market. We have people from different cultures come and display their hand work like clothes, earrings, shoes, bangles, necklaces... It's like a display of Kenyan culture because we have all the cultures represented here.*

Like in all the other markets, at times they can even double the price and if you have good negotiation skills then you can get quality things at an affordable price.

James (in English): *Now our small tour of Nairobi has come to an end and we have to get a matatu and go home. So we want to say goodbye – as you know, the means of transport in Nairobi is a matatu, so we have to get a matatu and go back home! Goodbye!*

7) FIGHTING... FOR PEACE IN MARSABIT (KENYA)

Raphael: *Let's leave Nairobi and go to Marsabit... a small town which has long suffered from tribal conflict. Let's see what happened there.*

Speaker 1: *When travelling to the north of Kenya, a must on any checklist is an expert driver.*

The trip from Nairobi to Marsabit - one of the last towns before the Ethiopian border - takes just over 10 hours.

The highway passes through central Kenya with its small towns and green pastures.

Along the way even the peak of Mount Kenya - the second highest in Africa makes a rare appearance.

Further north the terrain is more rugged. But it's evident that this area has been marginalized by past governments.

Northern Kenya is populated by 14 different ethnic groups. Many of whom are nomadic pastoralist.

It's difficult to believe that these beautiful landscapes are also stained by the blood of tribal violence, notably between the Borana and the Rendille peoples.

They are age-old conflicts over the ever scarcer resources of water and pasture.

Chief Lerapo (Rendille community) (in Swahili): *There were so many divisions between us, because of the scarcity of resources; each group had to find grass and water and so there was always fighting between us.*

Aa Duba (Borana community) (in Borana): *There was a crisis. The Borana people were dying. The Rendille people were dying. There was war everywhere and we were very afraid.*

Speaker: *Elizabeth Kanini has a Masters Degree in Peace Studies. She is a grassroots peace activist and lives in Ongata Rogai just outside of Nairobi.*

Elisabeth Kanini (in English): *Teaching their children is where I learned that this conflict has been handed from generation to generation. Because the children whenever I gave them to draw, they drew pictures of conflict. People killing each other. ... The enmity and hatred was so deep. ...*

They could plant vegetables but they could not sell to each other. Some could have a lot of milk but they could not share with the enemy. ...

So I decided to go and focus on this particular conflict because it was bringing all the development activities to a standstill.

That is where I met Johnstone Duba.

Johnstone Duba (in English): Hello everyone! My name is Johnstone. I'd like to take this opportunity to welcome you to Marsabit!

Speaker: Johnstone is 22 years old and comes from the village of Badasa near Marsabit. He is a member of the Borana people.

Johnstone, or "Duba" as many call him, is the first of a large family and his presence is a like a magnet for everybody, especially his younger siblings.

The Borana rely heavily on goats and cattle as the main source of sustenance. The lack of electricity and running water in many homes make daily life itself here a full time job.

Johnstone (in Swahili): Tribalism and the lack of peace have always pained me. I want everyone to be united, and that we live as a family. (...)

I saw that each person has something to do in the community: young people, adults, everyone. I too have taken this opportunity, as much as I can, and I decided to commit myself to spreading peace between our communities where people often kill each other.

Speaker: Johnstone began to volunteer at a school across the valley. The school belonged to the opposing tribe: the Rendille.

Aa Duba (mother of Johnstone) (in Borana): We were worried. We thought he would be killed and would not come back home.

Elisabeth Kanini (in English): He was among the first people to be accepted by the Rendille. And because of his behaviour, his openness, the people accepted him not as a Borana but as their son.

Johnstone (in Swahili): The work here involves our fathers, our elders, our village chief and the young people.

Elisabeth Kanini (in English): Elders, they do not listen to women and they do not listen to young people. (...) What enabled Duba to be able to talk to the elders is first his own behaviour. The respect that he has given to the elders, (...) the many sacrifices he has done... (...), the way he inserted himself among the people meant him being accepted and when you are accepted people listen.

Chief Lerapo (in Swahili): Our problems are now almost over. Nobody steals other people's cattle now. We do not kill each other anymore. We have decided to live as brothers and sisters, as a community, as people who understand one another and we have set aside all those other things.

Speaker: To bring the youth together Johnstone used a special weapon: / Soccer...

Johnstone (in English): Here we have youth gathered from all corners of this community. (...) These communities used to fight, but youths we are gathered here today to express our unity so that we build up peace, the change we want in our society.

Chief Abdub (Borana community) (in Swahili): This soccer project organized for both communities is a good thing, I think it will help.

Gagallo (Borana community) (in English): These small kids who are playing here with us will be the ones who continue to build in this area.

Mitambo (Rendille community) (in English): So I urge the youth of this area to embrace peace as peace is the tool for prosperity and development.

Aa Duba (in Borana): Now peace is prevailing. People are united and we have a shared market where the Rendille come and sell their milk and in return they buy Khat from us. They sell

kale to us and buy other things from us. We spend the day together. (and then they go back to the other side.) Our market is one. We live peacefully and our herds graze together.

Elisabeth Kanini (in English): Peace building is a call. (...) because it requires a lot of sacrifice, a lot of dedication. (...) The Rendille and the Borana, the young people, the women and the elders will be agents of peace not only in their community but in other communities which are in violence.

Chief Abdub (in Swahili): The rain is back and we are living well; God has heard our prayers too. The rain that we didn't have before, the food we were short of before, now there is plenty and we live as a one single community.

"Peace is not a fight, but it's something worth fighting for.

What we're doing is not in vain, no matter how small it is."

(from a song written by Geraldine and Treza, two youth from Kenya)

10) THE LIFE OF A COMMUNITY AT THE FOOT OF MT. KENYA

Joan: I was born in Embu, at the foot of Mt Kenya. One of the first communities of the Focolare Movement in Kenya is in this place. Let's hear from them about the past and about now.

Speaker: At the foot of Mount Kenya, a two hour road trip from Nairobi is the city of Embu.

The cathedral has a special feature. Some fundamental symbols of local tradition are incorporated in the structure. The roof calls to mind the two peaks of Mount Kenya and the pillars at the sides are in the shape of a tree.

The project was designed by the architect Carlo Fumagalli.

Don Pietro Primieri (in Italian): Carlo Fumagalli came here and was very much struck by the symbols in the bishop's coat of arms: Mount Kenya and the tree that is held sacred by the local population, the mogumo, and two hands symbolizing fraternity.

When the bishop went to the parishes with the design, to show them what he wanted to do, the people understood immediately. They did not say, "why, how". They immediately made themselves available and that's how it began.

The work was very impressive, seeing how the people responded and contributed to building it.

Speaker: It took 13 years to finish it. Carlo Fumagalli himself remembered the experience: "This unusual building, which was gradually rising up on their land, attracted everyone - either for work or out of curiosity – whether they were Catholic or not, that in the end it had an impact on the social reality itself."

Fr. Peter Primieri has lived in Kenya longer than he did in Italy. Around his parish at Iriamurai, near Embu, one of the first communities of the Focolare Movement has developed since the 1970s.

Maria Goretti Muthomi (in kiembu): In the Diocese of Embu we also have different ethnic groups (called "Miviriga", which means "descent"). But with the spirit of the Focolare, we are able to live and work well together, loving one another without feeling we belong to this group or that.

Patrick Njeru Maugu (in kiembu): To say something of my life, I would say that - especially through meeting Chiara's life and how I understood it - I am able to live well together with other people. First of all, being a school teacher, this life is of great help to live in harmony with other people. Establishing relationships and friendship with everyone becomes simple. We have learned to see everyone as God's children and to treat one another as brothers and sisters. Each person you meet becomes a friend, with whom you would want to live alongside and spend time with.

Augustine Njeru (in kimbeere): *What shows we are one, is that we help each other, and we feel the needs of the others as our own needs ...)*

(music)

Then we go to visit those families who have given their children [to God], who have given their lives [to God] as focolarini.

We are going because we feel that they, too, are our parents, and we go to visit them as if they were our own parents.

(music)

Maria Goretti Muthomi (in kiembu): *The parents and the whole family are very happy. They feel that their children are nearby. We do various things together, in an atmosphere of great joy.*

Patrick Njeru Maugu (in kiembu): *When there are problems in the family, at work or with the community, I feel much gratitude towards Mama Chiara, because she taught me something very important for my life. One thing I learned as a Gen which I will never forget is: "Love conquers all". I have seen that when I encounter difficulties and am able to accept them in the right way, by recognizing Jesus Forsaken, that is the key which opens the way to go ahead, right to the end.*

(Applause)

9) MILLYCENT'S STORY – NAIROBI (KENYA)

Joan: I will now introduce you to one of my friends, Millycent. Millycent was born in one of the largest slums in Nairobi, Mathare, the name of the river that goes through it. Millycent chose to stay and live there so as to be able to pass on to others the help she herself had received.

(Music and footage)

Speaker: *We are in Mathare, the second slum area of Nairobi. Around half a million people live here.*

Millycent Akinyi Ong'Weny (in English with Italian subtitles): *This is my mother and she is cooking some fish.*

Speaker: *Millycent Akinyi Ong'Weny is one of them.*

Millycent Akinyi Ong'Weny (in Kiswahili): *I was born and still live in Mathare, one of the slums in Nairobi. Life here has never been easy. ... My mother became an alcoholic and my dad had very few opportunities ...*

Growing up, I met people who helped me. Through some nuns, the Focolare arrived in Mathare, and a project began for us girls. We were able to go to school and study and they cared for us in our daily lives. When I finished studying I felt I could not leave Mathare. I felt I had to remain to help other children grow [better].

Now we are here in this chapel that was made available for us. I'm not alone, I'm here with many others and we help one another; there is Jane Frances, Marietta, Bernadette, Kioko; our coordinator is Lucia.

Speaker: *It was 2005. With the help of some families in the Focolare Movement, the small chapel of St. Anne was transformed during the week into a room that accommodated about thirty children, aged 3 to 6.*

Millycent Akinyi Ong'Weny (in Kiswahili): *When we started the project, it was very hard, it wasn't easy ... the parents of our children were expecting so many things from us, because in Mathare there are many other projects from which they receive money, land and other material things. ... However, also through people who know us, they understood what we are doing for the children. We are not here for money or for business, but to change the lives of the children and their parents too.*

Ambrose Ogueno Dullo (in Kiswahili): *I have seen my daughter change very much, in her behaviour, in the way she looks after herself better and in her studies. We often meet here with other parents and throw what is called the cube of love. ... It is all about love. We took it to other [families] and we live it at home now too.*

Millycent Akinyi Ong'Weny (in Kiswahili): *Even if we live in the slums, and life is hard, if we use what we receive with love, everything becomes big.*

Mary Kuthea (in Kiswahili): *People became aware of the change and wanted to join us. They saw our love, and the good behaviour of our children, and that there is a future for them.*

Agatha Rwamba (in Kiswahili) *One day, there was a shooting and a bullet came into our house, in the bedroom. The children woke up and asked me: "Mom, how long must we suffer? ... Then they said, "Let's get up now and toss the cube and see what it tells us to do." We threw the cube, and it said: "Love your enemies."*

Millycent Akinyi Ong'Weny (in Kiswahili): *Bringing peace and harmony is not an easy task, especially here in our country. Here in Kenya and especially in Nairobi, there are so many ongoing conflicts. ... Peace and harmony begin in our families. That is why we must first let peace and love grow between us and our children. In this way, we can bring peace to others, to our neighbours.*

Raphael: *Let's thank Millycent for all they are doing.*

10) MARIAPOLIS PIERO (KENYA) – CULTURES IN DIALOGUE

Raphael: *I said before that Emmaus and Jesus were in the little town close to Nairobi in May, where they had an experience which was entirely African, with many sounds and colours and with people who had come from many parts of the continent. I invite you all to experience this too.*

Speaker (in Italian): *Mariapolis Piero, which is about 30 km from Nairobi in Kenya, is the heart of the Focolare communities in Africa. Maria Voce Emmaus and Jesús Morán stayed there for 18 days, from the 14th to the 31st of May.*

There were various events - formation courses, meetings with church and civil leaders, ecumenical events, and also important academic activities, such as the one held at the Faculty of Law at the Catholic University of East Africa in Nairobi.

There were opportunities to get to know different aspects of this very beautiful country..

For this occasion, families from more than 21 countries in sub-Saharan Africa and Madagascar came to Nairobi. In fact, the family was the main subject of study at the 11th School of Inculturation, a school that began right here in Nairobi, founded by Chiara Lubich in 1992.

(Chiara Lubich's voice in the background which does not to be translated, saying : "We will set up a school for inculturation")

Speaker: *Chiara herself ... explained on that occasion how the light of the Charism of unity is not linked to a particular cultural environment, and so does not have a particular colour but is rooted in heaven and manifested on earth as "white light".*

Togba Roger Dion Ivory Coast (in French): *For me, this white light is the presence of Jesus in our daily lives, in our culture. This presence will help us take the very positive things in our culture and offer them to the Church and to humankind.*

Njoki Gaudensia Ndwiga (Gioia), Kenya (in Italian): *Meeting the charism of unity is the point where the Gospel becomes my culture. It is also a grace to live with people of other cultures, there you experience what is yours compared to the other's culture.*

Peter Njume, Cameroun (in English): *For me the word "enculturation", if I can make a summary of it, is like a way of sanctifying my culture, purifying my culture.*

Speaker (in Italian): *For the school of inculturation and the meeting of families that followed, the participants faced costly and long trips, even three days by bus.*

It was an effort that shows their determination to come together from all over the continent, from different languages and traditions but with a common commitment: to restore family values – that are the very heart of African cultures – and have been tested by conflict, injustice and the negative aspects of globalization.

There were challenging experiences of relationships, the relationship between the Gospel and tradition, man-woman relationships and the education of children.

Arthur Mumfungua Ngoy, Congo (in French): *In Congo many things are going well, but many others are not, because there are all the difficulties caused by war. There are practices that are incompatible with the gospel and are difficult to experience. There are values, but we have to live them in the light of the Gospel.*

Ianja Faraniana e Radoniaina Randrianirina, Madagascar (in Malagasy): *This message is not only for us. We want to bring it to all those we meet, without distinction; we ask the Holy Spirit for light and new encouragement so that we may give more of ourselves to others. Greetings to all families in the world. Goodbye. (Applause)*

11) DIALOGUE WITH EMMAUS AND JESUS

Raphael: Emmaus, after all this good news we would really like to hear some of your impressions of those days.

Emmaus: It is an impression that has been renewed seeing these videos, which are truly extraordinary. I had a very strong impression. I felt that I was a daughter of that people, I felt welcomed (applause) into a family that became my family. So I truly felt that this was a people prepared by God to give Chiara the chance to give her message, which means to incarnate Jesus in a new people, in a people renewed by her charism, but to incarnate him in a very concrete and strong way. So much so that when people asked me "Did you get tired in Africa?" I said "No". Then I asked myself: "Why not?" It was truly because I did not go on a journey but I had an experience: I lived as an African, as far as I could, and I felt I was African.

Raphael: Thank you Emmaus, thank you. (Applause)

Joan: Jesús, we would like to ask you, since it was your first visit to Africa, what was your experience?

Jesús: You saw the pictures and so you can already understand that everything was an experience, all that we did, what we ate, meeting the people, something very special.

Then it is true that we were in Kenya, but people were there from all over sub-Saharan Africa as far as South Africa, so in the end we could more or less tell where people came from, whether from Burundi or Rwanda. It was a very strong experience.

An impression that has stayed with me, after a few days or weeks, is that my soul had opened up, because I think, at least this is my experience, when you relate to an African, you are not only relating to a person, or to an individual; you become involved in a community, you enter into a people. So this opens you up, greatly.

I think that this might be the origin of the dancing and the festivities, because when you have this great openness you have to express it one way or another, so it expresses your whole self, your body, so we danced (applause) but it was not just dancing... it came spontaneously because you had been opened up. In this sense you can understand the power of relationships and also, when these relationships aren't going well, the suffering and the great challenge of reconciliation.

So it was an enormous gift. I believe that we are not the same, even though we may not realise it. Being here and taking the Movement ahead after this experience is already something very different. I think this is the strongest experience.

Raphael: Thank you.

Joan: Thank you. *Applause*)

Raphael: You wanted to say something else Emmaus.

Emmaus: I wanted to say that we are certainly different now. We have had a new experience, but everything has a root. You have heard these people talking about the "white light". This "white light" is something that we noticed in a particular way while we were there, because we heard once again what Chiara said when she went there for the last time and we heard a little bit of. You cannot imagine how different it was hearing it there, hearing it during this immersion. We understood what Chiara was saying about the light which comes from Above and which is not the culture of the people but is able to enter into the culture of that people in such a clear way as to make that culture stand out like white light, so show it as light which is different from the culture of that people. It was beautiful to see it there in that place.

I believe if we listen to Chiara with this soul, having had this experience together, having left our watches off – as they said to us – after having allowed ourselves to be taken up into the African rhythm of things and African movement. If we now listen to a small part of what Chiara said, we will have a completely different understanding. We will understand that this white light is not for Africa [alone] but that Africa was – I don't know how to put it – the diamond that showed it, that let it be seen by humankind.

So you can understand that this people had been prepared by God so that Chiara could offer this pearl, which is this vision of a light that comes from God and which is not made for Africa but for the whole world and for all cultures.

So let's listen to her and let Chiara take us with her. And that will be the end of this conference call. Thank you.

12) CHIARA LUBICH: ENTERING INTO THE OTHER PERSON'S CULTURE

Chiara Lubich:³ *I thought about this and the fact that a few years ago we began to work on drawing out this doctrine from our spirituality, a doctrine which is expressed in theology and philosophy, also in aesthetics, beauty and science, because our spirituality contains a little of everything.*

I understood this doctrine will not be linked to any particular cultural environment, like Rome, for example. Rather, it will be linked to the charism and the charism came from God. So it is linked to heaven and for this reason it comes down like a white light, that is, without colour. It doesn't have the European colour, the African colour or the American colour. Its colour is white, the colour of heaven. ...

I thought: God has put something powerful in our hands. Africa is calling for inculturation, Latin America is calling for inculturation, Asia, Asia is calling for inculturation. But how can we do it? What kind of theology will emerge? We certainly can't just put together the "seeds of the Word" and call it theology.

The "seeds of the Word" are expressions – songs and poems. But put together, they do not express the whole Christian message. The whole Christian message must, in some way, come down from heaven and it must be given to all the different peoples, to all the different cultures. Then they will feel that it is their own because it does not come from human beings but from God. And in feeling that it is their own, they will see it with the eyes of their own particular culture. ...

First of all, we realized we have a very powerful instrument for inculturation. I would say that it is uniquely ours because we have the charism of unity. We are able - if we live the Ideal seriously, not in a helter-skelter way, not just by organizing activities, and not by sleeping either. But if we live the Ideal in the right way - we are able to make ourselves one.

Do you know what it means to make yourselves one? It means that you completely cut the roots of your own culture and enter into the culture of the other person so as to understand him or her. You allow the other person to express him or herself to the point that you have that person within yourself. When you have understood that person, then yes, you can begin to dialogue with them and also pass on the Gospel message through the riches that he or she possesses. ...

Inculturation requires that we make ourselves one by entering into the soul, into the culture, the mentality, the tradition and the customs of the others so as to understand them and to bring out the seeds of the Word. Have you understood? (applause)

Raphael: So we will say goodbye with this invitation from Chiara which I feel is not only addressed to us in Africa but, as Emmaus said, to everyone in the world. Before saying goodbye let me remind you that the date of the next conference call is 17th September at 12 noon Italian time.

On the conference call website you will find this whole broadcast and the individual news items.

Joan: See you on the 17th of September! *Koajerin!*

Raphael: *Achpup! (Applause)*

³ From an answer given by Chiara to the representatives of the communities in Africa, at Nairobi, 18 May 1992