

CH Conference Call  
Rocca di Papa, 9th April 2016 – 1800

**Me, you, us – catalysts of change**

- 1) Telephones, satellites and the internet for universal fellowship & communion.
- 2) 50 years of life in Asia. *50 years after the first Focolare communities were established in Asia, it was a chance to share the journey so far and renew commitment for now and for the future*
- 3) Opening and greetings
- 4) The fruit of forgiveness – in South Africa. *We cannot know the effects acts of forgiveness can have: the experience of Welile Shasha in Pretoria.*
- 5) Gibi&W Cartoon – *An act of forgiveness*
- 6) United World Week 2016 – Run for Unity - #4PEACE: *live from Ecuador*
- 7) What can I do for my people? – Brazil. *Adriana Rocha's passion for art broadened into outreach to the poor in her city. That is how her commitment to the AFAGO Project began.*
- 8) Giving wings to hope in Moscow - *Moscow, at the heart of Russian Orthodoxy, has been warmed by the first embrace between Patriarch Kirill and Pope Francis. A small community, spread among its 18 million citizens, dreams of unity.*
- 9) Greetings from the community in Kazakhstan: *a phone call with Luca Baino.*
- 10) In conversation with Maria Voce (Emmaus) e Jesús Morán
- 11) Chiara Lubich: fraternity can only come about through a special kind of love. *Extract from an answer given by Chiara Lubich at a meeting of the Movement for Politics and Policy for Unity "Fraternity in politics: dream or necessity?" held in Berne, Switzerland, on 4<sup>th</sup> September 2004.*
- 12) Conclusion

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**1. Telephones, satellites and the internet for universal fellowship & communion.**

(Music and sound from the link up on 2<sup>nd</sup> October 1980)

Eli Folonari: This is the first transmission from Rome. ... Chiara was welcomed back with many gifts, flowers and telegrams that came from all over the world.

*Music*

Paolo Balduzzi: Here we are, look at this photograph we are right here in front of the table where everything began. Do you recognise them? It is Chiara Lubich and Eli Folonari who are linked up

Text of video 2280M (52')

with a few cities around the world. It was the 2<sup>nd</sup> of October 1980. This was the first world wide conference call.

Here beside me is Anna Paula Meier who lived with Chiara from 1986 and who was responsible for the link up from then on. To start with, Anna Paula, why is it called the CH link up?

Anna Paula Meier: Because it was sent via Switzerland. The first conference calls were made from there. CH means Confederazione Helvetica and the name stuck.

Paolo: Who knows how often you saw a scene like this, what's your reaction seeing this photograph?

Anna Paula: It's good because I remember those times of great communion amongst us, because Chiara's idea was to reach everyone and go ahead together.

Paolo: Today too there is this world wide communion and just think that in this very house, in this room, the editorial group organising the conference call still meets. It is an international group made up of people from the USA, Brazil, and the Czech Republic. It's a group where some work on the content, some on the technology and some on the translations. Cesare, earlier when we began working you said that this object here has a lot to do with us and with the link up, why is that? What is it?

Cesare Borin: Paolo, this is a model of a satellite, the Olympus satellite that the European Space Agency made available to us, in an experimental way, for the transmission of our first International events. Later on, a satellite like this one was made available for the video transmissions of the link up. Nowadays we don't use satellites for broadcasting the link up because we use the internet.

Paolo Balduzzi: How many languages is the link up translated into?

Iracema Amaral: We translate it into eleven languages, in the most common languages; but it is translated wherever there is a community of the movement.

Paolo: So we don't really know how many languages the link up is translated into. Among other things, Anna Paula you said there is something to see in the garden of this house, isn't there?

Anna Paula: Yes. There is the satellite dish which was a gift from the European Space Agency that was used for the video conferences we did from 2003 onwards.

Paolo: Great, let's go and see it.

*Opening of the conference call in 2003 music and part of opening roll call*

Eli Folonari: Hungary?

Female voice: We are here with all our hearts!

Chiara Lubich: This is the first link up by satellite!

Eli Folonari: Canada?

Female voice: Vancouver and Montreal are linked up too!

Chiara Lubich: Great.

Paolo: This is what big TV companies use. It's a large satellite dish which can reach the whole world. When it was brought here it had to be put somewhere and instead of hiding it or putting out of sight, Chiara wanted it right in the middle of the garden. Why?

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Anna Paula: Because she said it was because it is a monument to universal communion, which is universal love; this is the meaning she gave to these means of communication.

Paolo: Perfect. So Chiara was able to see it from that little balcony then?

Anna Paula: She said "It reminds me of all the people in the world".

Paolo: So, together with the whole world let's start this link up with the first news report which comes from Asia.

## 2) Asia – 50 years of life

Speaker: It is a story of friendship, proclamation of the Gospel and help for the poor but also dialogue between religions and cultures which the Focolare Movement in Asia has celebrated joyfully recently on the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its presence on the continent. Experiences shared by business people, university students, politicians and families outlined the developments in the Focolare communities in the Asian continent, from its humble beginnings 50 years ago.

Silvio Daneo: I was on a plane taking me to Asia. It was late afternoon and at one point, finally after all the preparations, I was sitting there quietly and I suddenly remembered that it was the 16<sup>th</sup> of February, at 3 in the afternoon, and that was exactly the same day and the same time that I had left for Asia 50 years ago. So it was natural, because this coincidence had not been planned, to go back those 50 years and relive those very special times.

### *Music*

Speaker: February 16, 1966, Guido Mirti, called Cengia, and Giovanna Vernuccio, with three other young focolarini were sent by Chiara Lubich to bring the new spirituality of unity to the Philippine archipelago and across the continent [of Asia].

Silvio Daneo: We set out during the height of the Vietnam War so when people talked about the Philippines we were not sure where it was but when they said it was after Vietnam, everyone knew what that meant. The war lasted more than ten years. [...] we might not have come back from that trip [...]; so leaving Chiara, and everyone here, was a huge step. [...] I had the privilege of accompanying Cengia. I was his voice and ears because he could not speak English. I had to speak two languages constantly for 15 years to help him.

Gio' Vernuccio: We went to stay in this little house and we did not have to buy anything at all. The lady next door lent us 3 chairs. We were 3 or 4 months without a fridge, in a country where everything goes bad in an instant. [...] We had a bit of money that was given to us. But we could not think of buying anything at all if others around us did not have them. And when Chiara came, she confirmed this: as they are so should you be too. [...] The Ideal certainly spread among the poor, but miraculously it also spread among many people who were rich and who gave so much to the poor, very many things. There was something that enabled the rich to give to the poor, and enabled the poor to give something they had to the rich. We travelled with the money from these rich people, and so the Ideal was brought to Korea, and to Japan. [...] We had a map of Asia, behind the door, when I closed the door Asia appeared, it was huge, [...] It was hard ... I can tell you the stories about ants, and about spiders, about poverty, floods and earthquakes, as we know from the news we hear from these islands, but all that was really covered by the charity of these people, a truly strong people.

Silvio Daneo: A journalist recently said that the Focolare was very successful in Asia [...] because of its ability not to impose, not to teach, not to expect, but to offer, we might say ... using focolare style

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language, making ourselves one, which is empathy, and to be empty which creates dialogue [...] and to someone one who 50 years ago had no idea what would happen and now sees all this, I believe he is authorized to be a witness and to confirm the truth of these facts. For the glory of God and to give room to something positive. (*Music and applause*)

### 3) OPENING AND GREETINGS

Tecris Noronha: Good evening everyone! Wo hen gao xing wen hou da jia! With this applause we want to thank Giò and Silvio for this story, which concerns in a special way we who come from different Asian countries. I'm Tecris from China, Macao. Here with me are some Asians: from Hong Kong, Thailand, Korea, Japan, the Philippines... and other countries.

Tecris: There's Roselyn from Myanmar...

Roselyn: Hello everyone, my name is Roselyn, I come from Myanmar. I am happy to be here with you. (*Greetings in Burmese language*).

Tecris: Thank you Roselyn, and beside me is Pernandos who comes from Indonesia. Can you tell us something about Indonesia?

Pernandos: Yes, thank you. Indonesia has 250 million inhabitants, the largest Muslim country. It has more or less 17,000 islands and there are 200 languages and dialects. Indonesia is multicultural, with religions and tribes. I was born into a simple Catholic family. I live in Indonesia, but we also have a symbol which I say is Indonesian. I will say it in bahasa first and then in Italian (he says it bahasa) which means "Diversity in unity", just that. In this variety, since the Focolare Ideal arrived, it has helped me to live unity. It could be useful to me, as an Indonesian, to live in a very varied community in a country that is so big. Thanks to Chiara Lubich, thanks to all of you!

Tecris: Thank you Pernandos (*applause*) Let's also welcome everyone here in this room. Most have come from Loppiano and they are from different parts of the world, like Cuba and Malawi, Greetings to all of you who are following this link up in all five continents. We know that near New York, at the Mariapolis Luminosa, over 250 people from all over North America are meeting. Hello! (*Applause*)

We also want to greet Marco Tecilla, the first focolarino who celebrated his 90<sup>th</sup> birthday last Sunday! (*Applause*). And greetings to Palmira Frizzera, who was among Chiara's first companions, who is at Montet in Switzerland and whose birthday it is today. Happy Birthday Palmira! (*Applause*)

During this link up we shall take a long trip... we'll go to Pretoria, in South Africa, to San Paolo in Brazil, then Moscow in Russia.

Now Predy from Athens should be on the phone. Can you hear me?

Predy: Yes, here I am!

Tecris: We have had news of all that is happening in Greece and all you are doing with many other people. Can you tell us about it?

Predy Pizzo: Yes, briefly. As you know for months now Greece has been in a very difficult situation because of the economic crisis which has affected many families and the arrival of crowds of men, women and children forced to leave their countries because of war.

In focolare and with the community we asked ourselves "What can we do?" How could we take on the sufferings and fears and loneliness of all those people? How could we do something practical both for the Greek families and the refugees...?

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We got together with other Catholic and Orthodox associations and social organisations. We went to the refugee camps regularly, helping, sometimes playing with the children, or giving out meals, bringing urgently needed items and above all being there, spending time with them and listening.

A network of solidarity among people was built up. The good thing is that we experienced how suffering unites people. What might have been problematic in relationships because of different faith traditions, was not longer an issue and people were side by side to loving everyone. It may be just a drop in the ocean... but it is a drop of love that reaches people.

Then next week Pope Francis and Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew 1st, are coming to the Island of Lesbos, with Archbishop Ireonomos, the Orthodox Archbishop of Athens, and the President of Greece. This is a great encouragement to increase this sharing and fellowship. We see that it has given joy and new hope to many people. Bye everyone.

Tecris: Bye, Predy! Thank you!  
Predy: Bye! (*Applause*)

#### 04) THE FRUITS OF FORGIVENESS – SOUTH AFRICA

Tecris: So let's go to South Africa. Dr. Welile Sasha is the head of a department of public health. He is conducting a major campaign to bring health services to a rural area. He sent to us some of his life experiences. Let's listen to one.

##### Welile Shasha

*I am married with 3 children, who are now adult and also married. I am a public health consultant, based in Pretoria.*

*Today I would like to share some experiences on forgiveness.*

*When I was shouted at by a colleague at a week-end conference of our organization. I said to him: "please let us do the work of the conference for now. We will talk about this when we go back home".*

*When we got home, on the following week, we met again and I said to him: "I was very hurt when you shouted at me but let us leave out the shouting. I would like to know what it is that I did wrong, because I do not want to repeat it to others". Then he said: "no, no, no, don't worry, it's over now". I said: "are sure?". He said "yes". I said "I was very hurt when you did that among a whole lot of people and you know...I am a bit older than you as well but I have forgiven you for that. Let us forget about it. I am not going to mention it again. Where is that computer disc you wanted me to help you with?"*

*So he went and brought it. I analyzed the data. He produced a report for his superiors and he was very happy.*

*A month later his wife came to me and said to me: "you know what? my husband did not beat me up this month". I said: "but what is that to do with me?". She said: "I suspect that you have something to do with it because since he has been working with you, he has been a bit different".*

*[...] So we continue to be friends to this day.*

*[...]*

*You may want to ask me why I do things like this. [...] On the day I joined the Focolare movement there was a discussion on forgiveness. [...], namely that it depends on the forgiver and not on the culprit. [...]*

*So I decided to practice this within my house, with my wife and with the children [...] and it worked very well. [...]*

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Tecris: Thank you Walile and greetings to everyone there in Pretoria. (*Applause*)

## 05) Gibi&W

Tecris: Hello, here we are with a few friends. What is your name?

Miriam: Miriam.

Tecris: Do you know GB and W?

Miriam: Of course!

Tecris: Oh, I thought not. And you? ... Anyway we will introduce you to him.

*(Music)*

*GB: "Now I'll show you!...!"*

*(Music and applause)*

Tecris: Thank you, Walter Kostner.

## 06) UWW 2016 - R4U - #4PEACE: live from Ecuador

Tecris: From the 1<sup>st</sup> to the 10<sup>th</sup> of May, there will be the United World Week, and this year the celebration focuses on Ecuador, in Quito. That week there will be workshops and events in many other cities around the world, on the subject of dialogue among cultures.

Catalina from Ecuador should be on the phone. Can you hear?

Catalina: Yes, I can hear you very well.

Tecris: What are you organising?

Catalina Hinojosa: This United World Week, which will be celebrated all over the world, will focus especially on Ecuador, and young people will come here from different countries. One very important characteristic of our Latin American countries and especially Peru, Ecuador and Bolivia, is the strength of ancestral cultures... where we experience intercultural dialogue.

This is why we chose the motto: "LINK CULTURES, A PATHWAY TO PEACE".

We will go with a group of young people to live for three days with some indigenous communities in the Andes, in Amazonia and to the Pacific, where there are descendants of African migrants.

It will culminate in a FESTIVAL FOR PEACE which will be held on the Equator, as a sign of peace half way down the world.

We have set up a project that will continue after the Week: "PERMANENT SCHOOLS FOR PEACE" so as to form leaders in a culture of relationships. These schools will be held in various cities starting with Otavalo, a city with indigenous culture. We will also hold them in different businesses, with the intention of producing a logo for fraternity which will be an inspiration to the businesses.

If you want to see our Facebook page it is: *jovenes por un mundo unido Ecuador*. Please 'like' it. We'd like you to come!

Tecris: We will live this special week with you in Ecuador and in all the other cities around the world. For those on social networks we suggest you post photos and messages about your commitment to peace with the hashtag #4Peace. For more information take a look at the websites: [www.run4unity.net](http://www.run4unity.net) or [www.unitedworldproject.org](http://www.unitedworldproject.org)

## 07) WHAT CAN I DO FROM MY PEOPLE - BRAZIL

Tecris: Now we are going to Brazil. AFAGO is a non-governmental organisation in San Paolo, Brazil. It was established by a group of young people who, in the late '70s accepted Chiara Lubich's invitation to "die for their people", that is, to get involved in the life of their own area so as to contribute to solving social problems. Let's hear from Adriana Rocha.

*(Music)*

Adriana Rocha: My whole relationship with the world was through art. *(Music)*

How could I say I was united to the world or believed in universal fraternity and not share my life with people living in my city, in my country? *(Music)*

I felt that my experience as an artist had to broaden. A friend of ours in San Paolo said she had got to know 3 or 4 families in a very poor community in the Pedreira district. *(Music)*

Maria Jorge: I was working with friends in the St Vincent (Society). Their main objective is to help families in need. *(Music)*

Adriana: The houses were very small, built by the people who lived in the middle of the woods. They were shacks made from corrugated iron, cardboard, wood that was found in the streets. We came here and got to know people little by little.

At first we took care of the children; we spent every Sunday in this community, playing with them. Then in 1984 we decided to tackle the basic need for housing together with the people. We suggested we work on a communitarian basis. We formed groups of five families who together built their own houses and those of the other four families. It was a very difficult job because they did not have money for any of the houses. *(Music)*

None of us had money either. We were students and there was a whole community to be built. *(Music)*

So during those years we did a lot of activities; bazaars, and parties; we asked for building materials at the builders' yards. Another activity was to spend all day Sunday on the main street in San Paolo, the Paulista and every time the traffic lights went red we ran to the cars and explained what we were doing and ask for a donation. A great deal of our money came from this. *(Music)*

Then in 1993 we formed AFAGO an NGO that takes in children in need, and gives them different opportunities, on a more educational and social level, with theatre workshops, information technology, music and sport. This is what we do for the younger ones; the older ones are also given a basic professional formation.

Bruno: Before coming to AFAGO I did not have any ambition to do better or study because our needs were completely different, like food for example.

Mayara: It was only by coming to AFAGO that we understand what it truly does. Personally AFAGO taught me to understand that I can be in control of my destiny [...]. *(Music)*

Adriana: I think that *dying for our people* today must be the same as it was in 1979; each of us should look around and ask ourselves "what can I do for my people?". *(Music)*

## 08) MOSCOW, GIVING WINGS TO HOPE

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Tecris: On 12<sup>th</sup> February in Havana, there was the historic embrace between Pope Francis and Patriarch Kirill. We went to Moscow to meet some of the Focolare communities living in the Russian capital.

*(Music)*

Victoria Gomez, journalist: Moscow, at the heart of the Russian Orthodox Church, has been warmed by the first meeting between Patriarch Kirill and Pope Francis. There is a small community spread among its 18 million citizens, which dreams of unity and gives wings to hope.

Serghej Yartsev, businessman:

Much has changed over the last 20 years. We have moved on from the time of discovering the knowledge of God to the reality of life with its daily problems. The discovery was a strong experience for me personally, as it was for many people in my country. In our community we are privileged to be witnesses to what God is doing at this time. We are silently following what is happening, seeking not to spoil it... I hope it will continue to go ahead. I would be in a hurry...

Galia Abaturova – journalist:

I am a journalist and one day I was asked to interview a doctor, Monica Mayerhofer who had come to work here. On one occasion she told me about the Movement. I would never have believed that at the age of 40 someone could change so much. ... When my daughter got married in church about 10 years ago, I felt bitter because my husband and I lived for many years without the sacrament of marriage... Then, eight years ago, we celebrated our wedding in Church. We took our step towards God and then continued on our journey together.

Oleg Stepurko – musician and composer:

When something terrible happens in life, God always sends a consolation. In our parish, Father Alexander Men was murdered. We were all lost, like sheep without a shepherd. Instead the Lord sent the Movement and Chiara Lubich became the mother who welcomed us.

My students are very young and it is hard for them to understand a spirituality because they did not grow up in Christian families. I preach the principle of the movement which is not to preach, to do it only through your life. I often get thank you letters: “You are the best teacher here... You tell us amazing things...” At that point I come out and explain: “I am nothing, I am an emptiness, all I have comes from God”.

Grisha Shilo – musician and concert pianist:

My childhood was quite difficult. I had no father figure and grew up in a boarding school. Even with all my inner issues and isolation, little by little I learned to build relationships. I learned to give. I work as a musician and travel all over the country and in my profession there are many temptations connected with my job. Some people are surprised that I believe in God, but I try to say what I believe, because I can't do otherwise. But... they accept me as I am and have not yet fired me.

Tanja Minakova – economist:

I got to know God when I was 17 through a friend. Something or someone came into my life that gave meaning to my going ahead and finding fulfilment. I studied economics. Chiara Lubich was launching a new project, the Economy of Communion. I understood this was my vocation. At long last my first project has been set up. I am launching it in collaboration with a community based business. I hope not only to create jobs and help people but also witness to God, so that other people can get to know him.

Ieromonaco Giovanni:

Text of video 2280M (52')

The great majority of the Movement's members are Orthodox, as are most of the people in the Russian Federation. There are some Catholics and a few Protestants; some people who are not Christian or who have not yet made up their minds. We are a very united community in which belonging to one tradition or another is seen as an enrichment. We have what you might call a prophetic experience: of already being a church that is 'one'. What divides the Catholic and Orthodox Churches is above all the past; history, made up of misunderstandings, wars and many negative events. What can help heal this are positive stories, stories with a plus sign in front of them.

Mons. Ivan Jurkovič – Apostolic Nuncio in Russia:

Unity in Moscow. I think there are very few places in the world where unity is more important than Moscow. People thought Moscow was important for geopolitics, but it is a religious capital. The churches evolved according to different rules, but following the same guidelines given by the Gospel. This came to the fore in the ecumenical movement. This has been helped by spirituality and the great charisms. Unity has become imperative now. This century, characterised by European issues, which are so short-sighted, has been much helped by the meeting between Pope Francis and Patriarch Kirill in Havana.

Father Alexander Borisov – parish priest at St Cosmas and Damian:

About the meeting between Patriarch Kirill and Pope Francis I would say there are very different opinions in Russia. It was a great joy for us that the leaders of the two largest churches should meet at last. I believe that in our world, where all social groups are divided among themselves, where peoples are divided among themselves, even close neighbours like Ukraine, Russia and so on, this meeting will change the spirit of relationships between different countries and peoples.

Alla Fedotcheva - Fashion designer:

Christians cannot rest at ease until unity among all Christians comes about/is reached. The meeting between Patriarch Kirill and the Pope of Rome, Pope Francis: what does it mean for us here in Moscow, in Russia where we live? It gives hope and peace, the prospect of a united world coming closer.

*Music and Text*

"It will take time but the little plant of the Ideal will grow and become a huge tree". Chiara Lubich to Tatiana Zhukova from Moscow, 3<sup>rd</sup> May 1997.

## **09) GREETINGS FROM THE COMMUNITY IN KAZAKHSTAN: ON THE PHONE WITH FATHER LUKE BAINO**

Tecris: Let's stay in the same region, but move to Kazakhstan. Luca Baino is there. He is a Franciscan friar who lives in Taldykorgan. He should be on the phone. Are you there?

Fra Luca: Yes, I'm here. Hello everyone!

Tecris: Hello!

Fra Luca Baino: I'm the only one here now because it's the middle of the night. Our parish here in Taldykorgan is dedicated to the Virgin of Guadalupe (her physical features curiously resemble those of the Kazakh people). [The parish] is composed of descendants of the deportees during the Soviet period. At that time the grandmothers secretly baptized and passed on the faith to their grandchildren. Once a month, I also visit a small community on the border with China.

Kazakhstan is a tolerant country, due to its plurality of religions and nationalities. The same government supports this tolerance and respect, and people here live it as part of their normal lives.

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We are linked to the Moscow Focolare centres. Last year, eight of us were able to go to the Mariapolis in St. Petersburg, and we will go again this year.

With some parishioner, we meet monthly to read the Word of Life. Some Protestants and Orthodox also come. We are all happy and interested to be able to live God's Word concretely. At Pentecost, we organize a music concert with spectators and artists from all three Churches. We also share important liturgical occasions taking place in one Church or another.

I take this opportunity to greet the whole world and invite those who want to come and visit us and help us for a while. Goodbye everyone!

Tecris: Bye! Thank you Fra Luca. Greetings to all.

Fra Luke: I will.

## 10) DIALOGUE WITH MARIA EMMAUS VOCE AND JESÚS MORÁN

Tecris: OnCity, let's revitalize our cities, was a citizens' workshop that took place at Castelgandolfo, with about 900 people from thirty countries attending. Professionals and students, engaged in social and political life. There was a great variety of experiences shared.

Emmaus and Jesús, you were there at OnCity. Could you tell us your thoughts on those experiences and the dialogue that took place?

Emmaus: I would almost want to forget OnCity, because we have just experienced a worldwide OnCity. We have heard experiences and stories from all over the world, that are along the same lines as the OnCity ones, which we heard last week and which show, I believe – which show that alongside a world that seems to be lost, that seems to have lost its way and is disoriented, divided, with all the ills of the universe! Alongside this world is another world. It exists, it is not an idea. There are people who are living for world unity. There are people who live for universal brotherhood, who build up positively! We heard this in their experiences, didn't we?

Jesús: Yes

Emmaus: I think this Conference call means this: to bind us all together, so not only the 900 people who were at OnCity, but all those who are now linked up with us –together: “We have got strength, we are strong, we're a force!”. What I see coming out of all these experiences is that all these people who spoke here or at the OnCity meeting, each one of them said to themselves “What can I do? What can I do?” and they set out to do something.

And this something, which one person began, changed something in the world. You felt, too, that each person had had the strength to start because they did not feel alone, because there was a body of people behind them, all, united with the same purpose, by the same Ideal and therefore able to give their lives, able to put their whole selves into it, for the sake of achieving something

I think this is a very strong reality, because even just one person, if he/she has the strength of the body, can work miracles! Just as one person alone can bring about a massacre, with a suitcase full of explosives, similarly one person alone, who is motivated by love, which is a type of explosive but in order to give life not death, can work miracles! So I think we should leave this link up strengthened.

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Jesús: I think we truly are strengthened. Because now, thinking of what this priest in Kazakhstan has said, and of all the people who are there, certainly they will feel strengthened by a people that is living the very same reality. Because Kazakhstan is a long way away for us, but for them, in that very big country, which faces huge challenges, feeling they are part of a body which is living for the same things is very important.

At OnCity we reflected on Chiara's marvellous text which is known as "The Resurrection of Rome". Chiara had just come away from a very strong experience of light, lived during the summer of 1949. She then comes to Rome and looks at the city. It was a city in ruins, shortly after the war, with many problems. But she had this light within and a very strong idea of fraternity. So she looks at Rome with those eyes and does not stand still. She takes on all the sufferings, all the sufferings she can find: the lame, the blind, people who were living lost within themselves, and she says: I must resurrect myself in them. She is so convinced of love of neighbour that she says: I resurrect myself by resurrecting them

It seemed to us that the "Resurrection of Rome" is like the symbol of what we must do, that each one of us should set out again every day, wherever they live – whether it is in a city, in the countryside, in a large or a small country – set out with the same strength, knowing that they must go out to take on the burden and sufferings of others, to love and to treat people like brothers and sisters, knowing that they have a body of people with them who are doing the same thing, maybe thousands of kilometres away.

It made me think of that [article] – I read it again recently – the "Story of Light" which was published in the New Humanity Review, in which Foco spoke about Chiara saying that they could be many lights lit up in the world so that when God looks down, he would see a firmament.

I believe that faced with so many problems that exist today, we see nothing other than this personal initiative which is at the same time the initiative of a whole body that is living. It is not only us living, of course there are many other people; but that is how it is for us.

Emmaus: That's true. I think it is exactly like that. What comes to mind is Gen Verde's song which says "I am not a super hero but I believe in us". None of us feels that we are super heroes, do we? But I believe in us!". (Applause)

So believing in us, we can be on the attack! We can leave this conference call with all the others, sharing sufferings, fears and anguish of course, because we feel them too, and we must feel them because we are part of humankind – feeling the doubts. But stronger than all of this is to have great hope, we are a power in the world because "we are not super heroes but we believe in us" and so each one of us becomes a leader. Do you agree? I think the whole world agrees with this; and I count on this agreement, that the whole world agrees, because certainly together we can do something.

How can we do it? I believe that no one better than Chiara can tell us how to do it. So let's listen to Chiara now, but truly with this disposition saying, "Chiara, what would you say to us? What must we do to build up this reality?" Chiara will speak to us about a special love. So then, let's listen to Chiara with her special love. This is the love with which we too want to love this world.

**11) Chiara Lubich: Brotherhood comes about only through a special love<sup>1</sup>:**

Chiara: Brotherhood can be achieved only through a special kind of love. It's a love that is directed to everyone, just as God the Father sends sun and rain on the good and on the bad. It is not a love that is directed only to relatives and friends, and a few other people. It is directed to everyone, and this already requires effort. If we left here having resolved to love everyone we meet, and, if we are Christians, seeing Christ in them, because he will say: "You did it to me," "You did it to me," ["You did it to me,"] I think that would already be a great step forward because the Christian revolution would spread out from here.

Then this love we need to build fraternity, is not only tolerance, although it is tolerant; it's not only solidarity, although it is solidarity too. It's something different because it's the very love of God. We Christians say it is the love poured into our hearts by the Holy Spirit. This love takes the initiative without waiting to be loved; it makes the first move, taking an interest in others (without bothering them, of course). It takes the initiative and does not wait to be loved. Usually people wait to be loved before loving. Instead it is a love which is first... and this brings a revolution. In fact, our Movement has reached the ends of the earth, not because of what we did, but due to a charism from God. If we leave here determined to love everyone, always being the first to love, without waiting.... Well, this is already Gospel life. Do you understand what the Gospel is? This is Gospel.

Then it's not a sentimental or platonic love; it's not a fleeting love, but a concrete love, which makes itself one with the person who is being loved. If someone is ill, we feel ill with him or her; if people are happy, we are happy with them; if they have achieved something, we feel their achievement is ours too. It's a love in which... as St. Paul says, we make ourselves all things to all people, all things to all people, we make ourselves poor, or ill with others. Sharing, that's the kind of love it is, a concrete love.

So it's a love that is directed to everyone, a love that takes the initiative, and a love that must be concrete.

Then we should love others as ourselves, as the Gospel says. Therefore, my friend, Eli, who I see there in the hall, is me, because I must love her as myself, like Chiara, as I love myself. Likewise, with Clara: I must love her as myself. I must love this lady as myself; and this lady, as myself, because this is Gospel. This too is a big thing: whenever do people love others as themselves? In a way we almost transfer ourselves into the others in order to love them as ourselves.

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<sup>1</sup> Bern, 4<sup>th</sup> September 2004 – Meeting of Movement for Politics and Policies for Unity - 'Brotherhood in politics: utopia or a need?' - Answer to a question

It's also a love which, if lived by several people, becomes reciprocal. Because I love Marius and Marius loves me; I love Clara and Clara loves me. This reciprocal love is the pearl of the Gospel. Jesus said, "I give you a new commandment: love one another as I have loved you" (Jn 13:34). He said this commandment is his and new, so it sums up the Gospel, it's the basis of fraternity. ... What can we do to be brothers and sisters if not love one another, as he loved us, he who even gave his life for us?

We should keep these things in mind.

Mindful of what this love is like, to answer the gentleman who asked the question, how should we see our relationship with others? We should see it in terms of dialogue. I must see the other person as someone with whom I should dialogue, but in order to dialogue, I need to know that person; I need to enter into their world. I must not assert myself, but try to understand the other person and let them say what they want to say. ... We need to enter into the heart and mind of the other person and allow the other person to be open, let the other person speak. They should feel that we are empty of ourselves and able to understand them. What happens then (in our experience) is that other people understand they are loved and they listen willingly to what we have to say.

The Pope says something very beautiful about dialogue. That we need to share our truth, what we think, but it must be "a respectful announcement", which means an announcement that respects the opinion of the other person, which has no intention of proselytizing, and does not want to impose on anyone.

This is the dialogue that should be carried out. It's the basis of our life, of universal brotherhood. (Applause)

## 12) **CONCLUSION**

Tecris: With this challenge of Chiara we will now say goodbye. We will meet next on Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> June at 8.00 p.m.

As usual, from tomorrow all the news will be published on the Collegamento CH website which can be shared on social networks. Goodbye everyone and good night to Asia. Wan an. Bye!

*(Applause and music –SEE YOU ON 18<sup>th</sup> JUNE!)*