

CH CONFERENCE CALL

Rocca di Papa, 18 November 2017

“Our goal: a united world”

1. **Opening and greetings**

With a song by Eudo and Reydibel and the phone call with Valencia - Venezuela

2. **Link up with the Gen at Castel Gandolfo and Manila**

- With greetings from the Gen in the meeting hall and in Manila

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What do a school principal and a Catholic Bishop have in common? A game that becomes a catalyst to help build - and mend – relationships.

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5. **Grottaferrata, Italia. Giulio e Pina: falling in love again, day after day**

Marriage

can bring unexpected challenges, and no one knows this better than Giulio and Pina. 22 years ago, on a day like any other, a sudden stroke changed everything. Here is part of their story.

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From an interview by Marco Aleotti – Rocca di Papa 2017.

9. **Davao, Phillipines. Friendship instead of videogames**

Seeing how many children were addicted to computer games, Lani decided to do something. Together with Alvin and the Focolare community in Davao they put their talents to work. That is how the Bukas Palad football team began.

10. **Chiara Lubich: “Our goal – a united world”**

From Chiara Lubich’s talk on the 20th anniversary of the Gen Movement at Castel Gandolfo, 2nd February 1987.

11. **Link up with Castel Gandolfo con Paolo Balduzzi**

With interviews with two Gen and Emmaus

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1) OPENING AND GREETINGS

(Eudo Rivera, Reydibel Mesa and Virginia: the Venezuelan song “Alma Llanera” – applause)

Eudo Rivera: Hola todos! Hello everyone all over the world, especially in the Americas and in Venezuela. Thanks to Virginia for the dance and to Reydibel who played the violin. As you can imagine the three of us come from Venezuela and we wanted to greet you as we do at home and with our music.

Welcome to the conference call.

My name is Eudo Rivera, I am a priest, and for more than 20 years I was a parish priest and a missionary and I taught in a place on the border with Colombia, with the indigenous community called the wajúu. I have been here in Rome for a few years and I live in a priests’ focolare. Here are some of my companions that I want to greet and who you can see here. (Applause)

We started with Venezuela because today on the 18th November it is an important feast day for the people in my city, Maracaibo. It is the Feast of Our Lady of Chiquinquirà. Here you can see what will be happening soon in the square in front of the basilica where the celebration is held. Special greetings to Maracaibo!

As usual in this link up, we are going to different parts of the world.

Venezuela has been suffering for months now from a very difficult situation where there is conflict, violence and protests..., as you may know. This situation has led to shortages of food and medicine and many other things. Life is difficult.

We are going to hear now from Ofelia who lives in Colinas de la Guacamaya, on the outskirts of the city of Valencia.

Ofelia, hola, come estás?

Ofelia Torres de Molina (in Spanish): Hola! (saluto di tutti lì)

Eudo: Que alegría, Ofelia! (Applause)

Ofelia: También para mi, anche per noi!

Eudo: I remember well when I came two years ago and spent time with your community. It was wonderful because you come from different religious traditions and different political convictions but you are just one community.

What can you tell us Ofelia?

Ofelia: It is not easy to find solutions to the problems we have in Venezuela, like the food shortages, lack of clothes and medicines. We always remember Jesus words: “give and there will be gifts for you” which we can live every day. If someone has nothing to eat, we share a pack of rice, or medicines and everything that we have in many different ways. We share with those most in need, without distinction, everything circulates. Everyone thinks of and bears in mind the others, life circulates, the community grows. This year the presence of a temporary focolare gave us new strength. In the midst of the violence and uncertainty of every day, the presence of Jesus in the midst is like a flame that attracts and gives hope to many.

Tutti: Ciao!

Eudo: Thank you. You have given us hope too. (Applause)

I invite you so send your impressions and greetings via WhatsApp to telephone number 00 39 342 873 0175, or write to the collegamentoch@focolare.org or the Facebook Page: CollegamentoCH.

2) LINK UP WITH THE GEN AT CASTEL GANDOLFO AND IN MANILA

Eudo Now we'll go over to Castelgandolfo, to the Mariapolis Centre, the Conference Centre of the Focolare Movement. Paolo Balduzzi is there for us, what is going on Paolo?

Paolo Balduzzi: Hello Eudo, hello everyone from the Mariapolis Centre at Castel Gandolfo, near Rome. We are here because 180 young people from the Focolare Movement, Gen, have been here for a few days. They have come from many countries and are working towards an important event, the 2018 Genfest.

To tell you the truth we will talk more about the Genfest later in the conference call, but I have been here this afternoon and have been meeting these young people and I would like you to meet them too. Here there are three young people from?

Salem: From Syria, our names are Salem, Asil e Nadir.

Paolo: So, three young people from Syria. That is not something to take for granted, coming from a country that has suffered so much from war, even though it is so beautiful. So thank you for this greeting and welcome to Castel Gandolfo. (Applause)

Then here is Michel from Mali. It is your first time here isn't it? You told me before that it is the first time you have come to an international Gen congress.

Michel: Yes, I'm Michel and I come from Mali. This is the first time I've come to an international Gen congress.

Paolo: Did you meet the Focolare in your own country?

Michel: Yes, I got to know the Focolare in my country and when I met it my life changed.

Paolo: Your life changed. Welcome to you too, thank you. (Applause)

Now I think we are going further East. What is your name?

Laxman: My name is Laxman, I'm from Nepal.

Paolo: Just think, from Nepal! It is a truly visible international event. Meanwhile I asked Maria from Portugal and Frantisek, from the Czech Republic to tell us something more about what you have been done in the last few days. So Frantisek, tell us who is here, how many are there here?

Frantisek: So Paolo, as you said there are 180 of us from 41 countries and all continents. We know that we are a representative group, for example, I am here on my own from the Czech Republic but there are many people following the link up via live streaming.

Paolo: Yes I know, Maria and you can tell me more about how hard you are working during your time here.

Maria: that's right. Over the last few days, we have begun to understand more about us young people today, our challenges, what we want to achieve in this world. One of the challenges is to build up a culture of fraternity, and one stage in this is the Genfest we are working on how.

Paolo: When and where will the Genfest be held?

Maria: It will be in Manila in the Philippines from the 6th-8th July. Another thing we are working on is what we will do after the Genfest; we don't want to stop there. We want to find out what projects and objectives we will have after the Genfest, for the next six years.

Paolo: Perfect. So we'll say it again just to be clear: 6th-8th July in Manila. Just think a Genfest has never been held in the Philippines before. It's a truly international event and this is shown by the fact that the group of young people working here in Rome at the moment includes Amin, who is from Algeria and a Muslim, and Kyoko who is a Buddhist from Japan. It must be a special experience for you to be here...

Amin: Yes, we are very glad to work all together for the Genfest with Gen from all over the world.

Paolo: Perfect. So we will say more about the Genfest later on this evening and you can see that we are not short of surprises here at Castel Gandolfo because Maria Voce, Emmaus, is sitting behind me, so let's welcome her. (Applause)

This welcome is just for Emmaus and we will speak to her again in the next conference call to go into depth about the meaning of the Genfest. Meanwhile we have said that we will go to Manila in July although really we would like to go now, immediately, straightaway, thanks to the young people in the Philippines who are greeting us.

Grace: *Ciao Emmaus! Ciao everyone! Hello!*

Tutti: *Mabuhay!*

Grace: *I am Grace and I'm here with different Gen from the secretariat and the Philippines! So right now we're outside the World Trade Centre where the Genfest will be held next year.*

Gen boy: *Right now there's a big event there called the ASEAN summit so we can't really go inside but we really want to show you the venue.*

Grace: *These days we've been excitedly preparing for the Genfest. We've invited different Universities, Parishes and youth groups of the 3 dialogues. In fact we were even able to get endorsements from Bishops from all over the Philippines. Everywhere we go sharing about the Genfest has inspired many different youth to go beyond their own borders and it really showed us how a united world really is possible.*

Gen boy: *Also at the same time, we recently held our auditions for the performers, so that is also really exciting to see.*

Grace: *Also did you know that the registration is already open so for those that want to go do register. How about you, Emmaus? Have you registered?!*

Don't forget to follow us on our different social media accounts so that you stay updated.

Gen boy: *Follow us on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter! ¹So let's get excited together for Genfest 2018!*

And don't forget to use the hashtag #Beyond all borders

(Kita-kits dito sa Manila!) Let's meet each other here in Manila

Genfest 2018 Beyond all Borders!

Eudo: thanks to all those working for the Genfest in the Philippines. Thanks Paolo and all at Castel Gandolfo. We will say more about the Genfest later.

3) Cordoba, Argentina - a roll of the cube that makes our day different

Now I'll ask you to look at this box here. Can you see it? It is full of cubes. This cube is special, perhaps not everyone knows about it; it is incredible because it is becoming a tool for peace. Every face has a message; for example, love everyone, share joys and sufferings. And people play with the cube very simply. You throw it and the side that comes up is what you have to live. Shall we try? (Throws the cube). Let's see... it says "love everyone".

In Cordoba, in Argentina, they tried to start a revolution with this cube. Shall we see what happened?

^{1 1} <https://www.facebook.com/genfest/> | Instagram: genfest.official | Twitter: @genfest_en

(Music)

Fernanda Otero – Focolares:

3 years ago we saw a Link Up talking about the cube, the dice of peace in Hungary and we asked ourselves: why don't we do the same here in Córdoba?

Together with the agency working for the rights of children and teens, we were able to reach the peripheries in Córdoba that were not accessible to us before. We also took the cube of peace there so it became "popular" not only as a symbol but as a lived experience.

(voices and greetings of teachers and children in a school)

Mónica Pereyra – School Principal:

For children - who have a whole life before them – it is necessary to give them more opportunities, the whole range of things they can do. We must work to make them aware of the importance of their life, of their being, of their body.

The first students who graduated from this school took different paths: some went to university, others found a permanent job, but there were those who took another path. Two of them were killed by the police in different circumstances...

When I think of them – of Luke for example – who was the first of the two brothers who were killed, I remember their mistakes, but I cannot think of them as robbers or youth who were bad... I remember their weak points but also their time in school that was good. But we could not do enough, and now they are no longer with us. We surely have much to do.

It is not easy to work for peace in these conditions. We are reviewing the training and formation we give. The cube of peace helped us understand where we are now and where we want to go. It has opened the way for us and that is what matters most.

Having a big cube here helps us to say: look, let's aim at this; if we don't have peace among us, let's play again, let's see what happened. If we are part of the game, we must understand why peace was broken.

Ricardo Seirutti, auxiliary bishop of Cordoba:

When Fernando and Guglielmo from the focolare brought me the cube, I put it on my desk to see its effect on others, and I invited them to throw the cube.

Once a week, every Wednesday we meet for the bishop's council. I took it once to see what would happen. So we said, let's throw it. And I said: "But each one must throw it because it is personal." And we did. Then, before a meeting where we had to do many things, we had an idea: "Why don't we throw the cube once and try to practise the point that comes out together? At least during the meeting." "OK, yes." And we saw that the cube says many things: love everyone, love your enemies. It is really a beautiful game.

What is best about the cube? It is so simple, so simple but it can change our attitudes and our actions throughout the day.

Many people throw the cube but they don't know that when "love everyone" comes out, these are words that Jesus said. But they already begin to love even without being aware of it. This is what is best about the cube, it is the cube of peace, the cube of peace. Anybody can throw it, anybody can do what it says, anybody...

(Applause)

4) Phone call with Barcelona – Spain

Eudo: Anyone can do it, “Cualquiera lo puede hacer...” the bishop said. Even if we think differently and have different views on life, or conflicting political positions. For example, we have been following the situation in Catalonia and in the whole of Spain, contrasts that have created splits in families and workplaces and in our communities. Let’s go to Barcelona. Josep Bofill should be there. He is the director of Ciutat Nova.

How are things Josep?

Josep: Very well. Ciao Eudo, greetings to everyone! Thank you for giving us the opportunity to share and express all the love of the Movement’s communities in Spain. We thank you first for all the messages we have received assuring your unity. We feel we are not alone in such difficult times.

The last few months, before and after the vote on 1st October on the independence of Catalonia have been overwhelming and have changed our lives and our reference points very quickly. Polarisation by the media has not helped and means that people are experiencing the situation with even greater passion. Amongst us, in Catalonia and the whole of Spain, there is great diversity: some want independence, some do not and some want a variety of things in between. Relationships among us have been tested... At the same time we feel it is a challenge, a grace and a calling ... to commit more and bear witness to the life of unity in diversity that Chiara spoke to us about when she came to Spain in 2002, to be able to shed some light around us in this context.

We began a dialogue amongst us that is more explicit, more sincere and with greater sense of acceptance amongst us, of the reality that each person brings with them, their own story, identity and fears. One example of this is the manifesto #SonoDialogo the outcome of a deep experience among representatives of the Movement from the whole of Spain. This commitment has led us to have many small experiences that you can see on our website and on Mariapolis.

To tell you the truth it cannot be taken for granted. Sometimes we feel powerless and hurting, we see that what is happening is a serious trial but our determination to go on living as brothers and sisters and people of the same family, members of the same social community, is stronger. We count on you to help us go ahead.

Eudo: Of course, you can count on us! Thank you. (Applause)

5) Grottaferrata - Italy. Giulio and Pina: falling in love again, day after day

Eudo: Sometimes life brings trials and there are unforeseen things that change our lives and that we can do nothing about or so it seems. It is what happened to Pina and Giulio.

Recording : song “For you”

Canzone registrata di Giulio: “When you feel that hope is dying in you”

Giulio Ciarocchi: I can’t sing any more. I lost my singing voice. I used to sing all the time.

Music

I had a terrible headache when I got up, but I had to go to work. A colleague said to me “Giulio, you are not well”. I said “Why are you saying that?”. He took me to the bathroom in front of the mirror and showed me my mouth which on one side was like this and on the other like that. I had not noticed. I could not feel anything. At the hospital they said “You are having a stroke”. That was how it began. (Music)

Pina Ciarocchi: That morning when I had said goodbye to him and shut the door, I said to myself “Well, you met such a good looking guy”. Then when I got the phone call from a friend or ours who worked with him, I was frightened because I did not understand what had happened. I went to Rome with two friends and they took me to him and he was no longer the good-looking guy of that morning, the stroke had changed him. It was hard to recognise him and I thought for a moment that our life was changing. (Music)

When I saw him so completely different, I asked myself, who is this person? Because I didn’t recognise him and inside I felt as if, not as if; I understood that God was helping me, because we had always tried to see Jesus in one another, together – as the Gospel teaches – to see Jesus in one another; and I felt that was what remained. Yes, he had changed but Jesus in him had not. “Just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.”² That was real.

Giulio: I lost the use of this arm and it’s as if it were not there. It’s there but I can’t move it. I also lost the use of my left leg and the whole thing started then because I realised that I would not be able to live my life as I had before.

Pina: 22 years have gone by, but they have not been easy, because every day we have had to recognise one another in all the things that were different in this situation, because the plans we had came to nothing. Giulio needed help with everything. I remember that our daughters and I practiced dressing using only one arm to be able to help him. We undid the toothpaste a bit so that he could open it [with one hand]. We had to learn how to live with the limits that were there. I would say we also had to learn how to fall in love again, day after day.

(words spoken in the background as they look at some photos)

Pina: Do you remember these Giulio?

Giulio: Yes

Pina: Look here

Pina: We experienced many challenges over the years: can we manage to stay together? To really be “together for ever”. Can we manage with our children? Didn’t we Giulio?

Giulio: For me it was my radical choice of Jesus forsaken, that I had made with Chiara, that kept me going up to now, always, without looking back, to how I was before; I have not looked back. I have looked forward, that is all, and I have believed.

Pina: we believed ..

Giulio: I have seen that God has taken me ahead right to the end and I have never lacked anything and he has given me the strength to do everything.

² From St Matthew’s Gospel 25,40.

Music

Pina: I remember after you came home after 5 months in hospital, one of our daughters went to Frascati one evening with her friends. When she came back, she woke me up to say "In Frascati this evening I saw many people in wheelchairs... maybe they were not there before, or I did not see them..."

Giulio: I was seven years short of pensionable age and I was wondering how I would get to work for those seven years because up until then I went to work by bus and underground. How did I do it. The Eternal Father helped me. I said to him "You know that I must work to have a pension because I have got children, I must pay for their studies. I have got three". One of my colleagues drove to work every day and he said "Giulio I will come and fetch you every morning and bring you home every evening. He did this every day for seven years and then I retired. I am now retired and all is well. I would give him a medal! (Music)

Pina: It was difficult for example to get used to this change of pace, because Giulio became slower and slower and I am rather quick...

Giulio: She said hurry up, come on, let's go, let's go.

Pina: But this is good because he had to put up with me as I was trying to help him speed up and at the same time I learned it is also love to walk as fast as the other person can.

Woman's voice off-screen: Cheers to you both!

Tutti Cheers!

Giulio: to us all!

Pina: to our friends!

Eudo: I am sure that many people would want to hug you both. Let me do it on behalf of everyone. (Gives them a hug - Applause).

7) Phone call with the city of Man – Ivory Coast

Eudo: Now we are going to the Ivory Coast. 25 years ago the little town called Mariapolis Victoria began close to the city of Man. Now there have been two weeks of celebration and thanksgiving. For this occasion delegations came from Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Kenya and even from Italy, Switzerland and France. Religious and civil dignitaries came too. It was a great celebration!

This Mariapolis played an important role during the civil war, when for a time it was on the front line... and became a place where there was peace and reconciliation. Tchilalo, we want to celebrate and look to the future with all of you. We are listening, Tchilalo!

Tchilalo Azia: There is a festive atmosphere here and everyone is full of joy.

It's true the year 2002 was a very important time in the life of the Mariapolis.

The city of Man was targeted and all the people fled. The embassies asked all foreigners to leave the country, but we chose to stay to be close to the people in that painful time. For a few months, the Mariapolis became home to about 3,000 people. It was an oasis of peace. In the hospital, we

treated the wounded from the two factions at war; we welcomed Christians and Muslims. The conflict is not completely over and we continue to build bonds of peace, also through concrete works like the hospital, the school, and the social centre. 80 people come through the Mariapolis every day from the surrounding areas and it is still a reference point for many people. About 20 of us live there all the time, of different ages and from different countries. It is a witness to the fact that diversity becomes enrichment.

Our celebrations end tomorrow with a solemn thanksgiving Mass when we will thank God for all he has done over the last 25 years.

Eudo: Thank you! (Applause)

8) Brief news from Wallis and Futuna

Eudo: Now we are going to the Pacific Ocean to the islands of Wallis and Futuna. We have received this report made by local television in Wallis and Futuna, and are seeing it just after the UN Climate Change Conference that finished yesterday in Bonn, Germany.

Speaker (in Italian): *Wallis e Futuna, represent three ancient indigenous kingdoms on three islands in the Pacific Ocean, about 4,000 Kilometers east of the Australian coast. Once the islands were wooded with an incredible variety of vegetation, now they are almost bare, with the inevitable serious consequences for the stability of the ground. The environmental problem is worldwide and massive. Its effects have even reached places like this, often thought of as an earthly paradise. The people know they should do their part as we see in this report from the national news.*

A young woman (in French): *I am gathering up the food tins, which must be kept separate from the cans because the cans will be compacted separately to make others.*

A man (in French): *Action for the environment helps combat disease. We have various illnesses here nowadays that we do not know where they came from.*

Coletta (in French): *In New Caledonia, my friends and I set up an association for the environment.*

Speaker (in French): *Taking action for the sake of nature, but not only that. The Focolare Movement that started the project wants people to come together to resolve this problem and bring the two separate parts of the village together with their leaders. This idea was welcomed by the leaders in Vailala.*

A man (in French): *Since I became leader of the village, we have organised clean up days on a regular basis. I am pleased with the Focolare's initiative. They care about our village and cleaning it up and I support this action: it is essential to protect our environment and build a peaceful society.*

A woman (in French): *The Focolare's ideal is to build unity and that means we have to get moving and work together on concrete projects. Even though culture and tradition have separated us, something unites all of us in this village and in all the others; it is prayer. We meet for prayer. So we can all come together in the projects we are doing at the moment.*

Eudo: Thanks to you all, there in the midst of the Pacific! (Applause)

9) Carlo Casabeltrame: travelling ... to build relationships

Eudo: Just a few days ago, we celebrated the 90th birthday of a friend of ours, Carlo, who is here today. Congratulations Carlo! Carlo is Italian and from Turin, but he spent 50 years in Latin America, so we asked him a few questions...

Carlo Casabeltrame (in Italian): *I always dreamed of travelling and seeing the world. I hated hotels. I wanted to travel the world and be with people, work with people and live with them. So that is what I did for 50 years.*

I arrived in Recife on the feast of the Epiphany in 1962, we went to the first Mariapolises in Garanhuns and that was the start of an adventure, not in a sense that I would call cinematographic, because the train that left Recife to go 300 Km took 16 hours travelling through the sugar cane.

This Brazilian world was so different. It clashed with from my northern Italian mentality that was deep within me, deep down. But it truly was an experience, an enrichment that I learned. I found work, a salary that I had never seen in my life before, so that we were able to rent a place to live (pause) in Buenos Aires and we started this adventure. There were three of us, we took a map of Buenos Aires with a population of 9 million, three for you, three for you... we divided the city into three parts and I began going round when I was free on Saturdays and Sundays. I went round to speak to people; we did not know the language, we looked for some Italian priests, some people.

I wanted to travel and travel I did. I used to do 5,000 kilometers a month in coaches.

After 12 years in Colombia, which meant contact with 15 countries – because we had all the countries from Peru to Mexico - I spent 6 years in Chile.

I am in touch with everyone; people in Mexico, and Chile, You can't break a friendship with someone. So I keep in touch by email, by skype with half the world, so it has been an extraordinary enrichment for me.

Eudo: Carlo, someone like you cannot be stopped. Thanks and best wishes!

10) Davao, Philippines. Friendship instead of videogames

Eudo: – **Often** when we are faced with problems in society we feel unable to do anything. Let's see what Lany did in Davao, in the Philippines, making use of her great passion for football.

Speaker (in English)

We are in Davao, on the island of Mindanao, one of the most important cities in the Philippines.

Davao is nicknamed "the city of fruits and flowers" but is also the center of strong tensions: it is the city where the current President of the Philippines Rodrigo Duterte previously ruled with an iron fist as Mayor and where several groups of Islamic separatists operate.

Only a year ago a bomb at a market caused 10 deaths and wounded more than 50.

It is from this city that our story begins.

Lani Lee Justo, (in Tagalog – with English subtitles): *I am Lani. I am one of the coaches of the Bukas Palad Football Team.*

[Soccer sequence

Text (in English) THE BUKAS PALAD SOCCER TEAM WAS ESTABLISHED AS A RESPONSE TO THE GROWING PROBLEM OF COMPUTER ADDICTION AMONG CHILDREN.]

Speaker (in English)

This is a very common phenomenon: young children stop in these internet points after school where they waste away the rest of their day.

Lani Lee Justo, coach (in Tagalog with English subtitles): The children used to come home very late and hardly eat because of their addiction to computer games. So I asked myself, how can we help? What kind of social work? What can we introduce as Gen? I was only good at playing football. It was the one sport thing that made me truly happy.

The biggest challenge was our finances because they really had nothing.

They were so frail, and we were thinking, how will these children compete? They were so thin, just a little tussle and they'll fall to the ground. But the kids just laugh when this happens, because they are really enjoying, they're putting their love on the game.

Alvin Justo, coach (in Tagalog – with English subtitles): Here they also get to learn and understand the value of team work. This is one of the many things they can learn from this team sports.

Lani: We just don't think about what they should learn while playing football. It's not as simple as that. You also think about how they are with their family, if they are eating well. Because you won't be able to build a genuine relationship as a mere mentor or coach. Relationships are built because of the many experiences you've shared, because of the number of challenges you've overcome together, that is how you build lasting relationships. (music)

We are not the only ones who formed the Bukas Palad team. It's the entire community, including the parents of the children who always show their support every day, by bringing food not just for their kids, but for everyone in the team. (Music)

Mary Sol Alvero, Bukas Palad Football Player (in tagalong, girl): What I love about football is playing with my friends. And then we get to encounter more friends from different places.

Rhea Badar, Bukas Palad Football Player (in tagalong, girl): They always teach us. Coach Lani and Coach Alvin have improved our skills. I learned self-discipline, being friendly and improving relationship with friends.

Lani: I have grown to love football. It's that same passion which I wish to pass on to the children. Because it is that very passion that gave me life direction.

I see myself in them, whenever they experience growth, when they learn new skills and face challenges. That's why I want them to persevere and really reach for their goals. (Music_ (Applause)

Eudo: Lani's initiative was supported by the Bukas Palad centre, which means "Open Hands" in Tagalog. Bukas Palad has been working on social projects in different cities in the Philippines for over 30 years. They are projects funded by the "Associazione Famiglie Nuove" (AFN) New Families Association – a charity that supports many other projects caring for about 11,000 children in 49 countries.

Another section of the Focolare Movement working in a similar way is AMU (Azione per un Mondo Unito) Action for a United world, an NGO which is currently working on 35 development

projects in 32 countries. This is their website. Supporting AFN and AMU could be a concrete way of responding to the Pope's call for a world Day for the Poor, which is tomorrow.

Then, on the subject of poverty, we have received a message from the community in Porto Rico: "The community in Porto Rico sends you a special greeting as we recover slowly from the devastation caused by Hurricane Maria. Thanks for your prayers and the help we have received for our brothers and sisters". Thanks for your message" (Applause)

10) Chiara Lubich's thought: "Our goal – a united world"

Eudo: When people don't know where to go, they either arrive late or they never get there. That is why it is always important to focus on a goal in life. Now Chiara will remind us of this. The message we will see now is one she sent to the Gen on the 2nd February 1987, on the 20th anniversary of the Gen Movement.

Chiara Lubich: *I have not come to give a long talk, but above all, to greet you. I could not miss seeing you this time because as you know, and as I have seen in your messages, this year we are celebrating the twentieth anniversary. The twentieth anniversary – it's a big word because it is twenty years, and most of you are not even twenty yet. The 20th anniversary of the Gen Movement.*

The Gen Movement began twenty years ago. What does the Gen Movement mean? What began then? It was the second generation of the Focolare Movement. ... The Lord gave us a huge charism. ... What does charism mean? It's a great gift of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit has worked very powerfully here, in a thousand different ways, and we felt the need to hand over everything to the next generation, to hand over this spirit, the spirit as it is and completely. We did this in a symbolic way. I remember twenty years ago we handed it over in the form of a flag. We handed over our flag, because a flag means everything. It means a tradition, a history, a culture, etc., and so the whole Ideal. ...

To sum it up, on one side of the flag we wrote: "My God, my God why have you forsaken me?" Jesus forsaken as the means, the method, as everything in order to reach our goal, written on the other side: "May they all be one". Our goal, to reach a united world.

...

Now this year, we will see Genfests being multiplied all over the world ...I see them like many fireworks rising up to heaven. But they are not artificial, they are real, real fires of love for God shooting up to heaven to give glory to God and win over thousands of people so as to witness to thousands of young people that God is real, that God is alive, that we should live for him. ... So we should re-declare our faithfulness to Jesus forsaken and renew our consecration to him. If you end with a new consecration to Jesus forsaken, to your flag, it will be the "crowning glory"! (Applause)

Because Gen, through him, the Risen Lord walks through the streets, he goes everywhere in you. The Risen Lord means Jesus. He walks through the streets, he attracts people and takes them with him, leaving behind all that is dirty, all that is not right, like a refreshing stream that leaves behind all that cannot be swept along by its clear water. That is how it is, if you live Jesus forsaken; but if you live Jesus forsaken we come closer to the objective of "May they all be one".

You might say “a united world!” A Gen once asked me, “Do you really believe in “may they all be one”?”. How can I not believe in it if God asked God for it? Jesus, the Son of God, asked God for this, he asked himself, so God cannot say “no”. What I always think is that history is in the hands of God - He is the one who guides the course of events ... so we must believe in a united world. ...

Take the charism that has been given to you, that is being given to you little by little: these pieces of the charism. Take all of it, all of it, so that you can hand it on whole and entire to the coming generations. When it’s your turn, we will not be here anymore. When you are in the front line, we won’t be here, so you must hand on this charism to future generations.

So what do I promise you, what can I promise you, from my experience not only with the Gen Movement, but with the other Movements? That you will see miracles, miracles of God’s grace, because God is with us, God is in our midst, God is in our midst and he is Almighty. He alone is almighty, the others are just a bit powerful, but they are not almighty.

So I greet you once more, Gen, I promise to be close to you, to keep Jesus in the midst with each one of you, with each one of you, Mary knows how true this is, so that you can always count on this.

Be happy, bring happiness, help people understand that God is joy! Ciao Gen! (Applause)³

11) Link up with the Mariapolis Centre at Castel Gandolfo

Paolo: Here at Castel Gandolfo Chiara’s words were very special for us, obviously, because – and I say this personally too – although she said this 30 years ago, it is so relevant to today. This is not only because of our experience now at Castel Gandolfo over the last few days but also thinking of what the 2018 Genfest means for many young people around the world. I am sitting here beside Emmaus and beside other young people, other Gen from all over the world and I am going to find out more, a bit more detail about the Genfest. I’ll start with Giuseppe.

You are Italian aren’t you, Giuseppe?

Giuseppe Yes

Paolo: So Joseph, in 2018 we will make history because it will be the first Genfest held outside Europe. Why are you going to Manila? Why Asia?

Giuseppe: First, because 60% of the young people in the world live in Asia, so going there means looking to the future, aiming towards universal fraternity, trying to reach as many people as possible. That is why we chose Asia.

³ From Chiara Lubich’s greeting on the 20th anniversary of the Gen Movement – Castel Gandolfo, 2nd February 1987.

Paolo Balduzzi: The title you have chosen for the Genfest is very clear: “Beyond all borders”, meaning going beyond frontiers and limits. I’d like to know more: is it just a slogan, a good slogan and nothing more?

Giuseppe: No, of course there is a lot more! “Going beyond borders” is one of the biggest challenges we young people are facing. When we talk about going beyond borders we actually mean going beyond our personal borders too, which might mean prejudices but also social borders, and borders between different cultures. We want to go beyond them all and make them become an opportunity to unite rather than something that divides us. Then at the Genfest, we’ll see the united world that already exists.

Paolo: Yes, a united world that already exists. So now it’s your turn Emmaus. I must start by asking you the question that the young people in Manila asked at the start: have you booked for the Genfest?

Emmaus: Of course! I have definitely booked, no doubt about it.

Paolo: So you will be there?

Emmaus: Of course! If God wants it, of course, if everything goes well. But I really think so.
(Applause)

Paolo: This applause shows how happy everyone is. So, Emmaus, we have seen that the Genfest is a meeting in which young people are in the lead. Now, should the Genfest interest all the rest of us, who are of different ages?

Emmaus: First, I want to take the opportunity to say a huge thank you to the young people, because they have shown great courage in going to Asia to hold the Genfest there and to take 10,000 young people and maybe more. It is very courageous of them. But it is a courageous act that I see as the response of young people today to Chiara’s appeal in the 1960s when she said, “Young people of the world unite”. This appeal resounds today too and not only for young people. The youth make it their own and they are the driving force and are working for it, but it is an appeal to all those who have followed Chiara. Why should we respond to this appeal? Because Chiara gave us an aim, a purpose, as we have heard – that all may be one, a united world, and this aim has not yet been reached. The first generation has not been able to reach it on its own, they could not do it and nor can the second generation do it on its own because it is an immense goal. Here we need several generations to be involved.

So the idea of a united world must be handed on from one generation to the next and the generations together, all united, can try to fulfil it by taking the steps that they are able to take now.

I think this is the most important thing.

So I want to say that the Genfest is not something that just concerns young people; the Genfest concerns everyone, all of us. That is why I have booked and why I want to go and I hope many of us will be there.

Paolo: So, let’s see if I’ve understood, even if it’s clear that we cannot all go to Manila, we can all work for the Genfest.

Emmaus: Absolutely! I would like to say everyone, seriously. You are there thinking, but I am in an enclosed convent, what can I do? Pray! Prayer is very important for the Genfest. Someone

else might say, but I'm ill, I can't... Offer your suffering to ask God for the graces needed so that all the young people who are there and for the whole world, because not only young people will be there. All over the world, people will help prepare the Genfest. So let's set to, all of us. Some people can help in reception; some can help organise the programme; some can give financial help for the young people who would not be able to go without it; some can find sponsors. We might have only a little cash in our pockets but we may know someone who would help if they knew there was a need. Let's do all our part, all that is necessary.

The Genfest is mine, it's ours.

Paolo: Fantastic! So the Genfest is ours. Thank you Emmaus because you are encouraging us to get involved and we can take this on all together.

Emmaus: All together, all together and we will make it happen all together. And we will be there all together, even if only 10,000 are actually there, but we will be all together from all over the world.

Paolo: Thanks Emmaus.

So let's see now, from the point of view of helping, we have talked about helping. What can we do? Kiara, you are from the Philippines, the country where the Genfest will be held. What can we do in the coming eight months to work together and reach the Genfest together?

Kiara: As Emmaus said, it is not only up to us young people, but all of us. There are many things to do but we would like you to do three in particular. First, the local Genfest. You can organise a Genfest and pray for peace there, as well as doing a concrete project wherever we are. Secondly, it would be fantastic if all the local communities could get together to help send one young person, or more, to the Philippines, to Manila to have the amazing experience of the Genfest.

Third, as you see, the T-shirt. You can buy it here. If you have any questions, you can ask wherever you are. Information is available in the zones.

Paolo: Then there is a website, isn't there?

Kiara: Yes: y4uw.org/Genfest (Applause)

Paolo: Perfect. This applause shows that everyone here is behind this project. At this point, I cannot fail to show you my own T-shirt, which you can see here. I hope it is my size, but if not I will change it, but I will make my contribution for it and that is my first commitment for the Genfest.

Thanks to all the young people who are here. Thanks Emmaus. All the best for the work ahead, for all of us, not all of you but all of us, for this Genfest. I'll remind you of the website.

<http://y4uw.org/events/genfest-2018/>

And bye to everyone from Castel Gandolfo! Thank you! (Applause)

12) Conclusion

Eudo: We are coming to the end of this conference call. I would like to share another message we have received. This one is from Poland: "Wonderful experiences this evening. Thank you so much, from Cardinal Francis Kriengsak and the bishops of various churches meeting in Katowice in Poland". (Applause)

We truly want to thank everyone who has contributed with their stories and experiences and all kinds of help. This includes the financial help that came after the last link up. You know that no contribution was too little, including the one that was less than the cost of a cup of coffee. Thank you very much. (applause).

Before ending I would like to give you some great news. Here in my hands I have got a fantastic book “Words of Life” edited by Fabio Ciardi. It is the first in a series of 14 books to be published on the works of Chiara Lubich. There are 365 [Words of Life] I can’t remember exactly, written by Chiara Lubich between 1944 and 2006.

By the 23rd November it will be in Italian bookshops, so I am very happy to tell you about it...

And with this good news we will say goodbye and make a note of the next link up which will be on the 24th February at 8.00 p.m. Italian time.

Bye everyone, we embrace you all.

Gracias a todos! (Applause)