

Text of video 2412M - length: 48'

CH CONFERENCE CALL
Rocca di Papa, 8 July 2018

Special Genfest CH - from Manila

OPENING WORDS, THEME SONG AND INTRODUCTION

Clara Ramirez: Greetings from Manila! The Genfest has just finished, they were three beautiful days! Of course, we did not sleep much, but it was worth it!

Romeo Vital (Romé): We will share many moments of this Genfest with you and some stories of the extraordinary people we met here in Manila.

(Music and title)

**CH CONFERENCE CALL - SPECIAL EDITION
GENFEST – BEYOND ALL BORDERS
Manila, Philippines 2018**

(Music)

Romé: Hi everyone and welcome to Manila! Hi, Clara, welcome!

Clara: Hi Romé, thank you! It's the first time I've come to Manila.

Romé: Manila is a huge city. In fact it has a population of 13 million, and to get to know it we must ride a jeepney... So let's go!

(Music)

Clara: I come from Los Angeles. There will be around six thousand of us young people from all over the world here at the Genfest! The title of the Genfest is Beyond all Borders.

Romé: As we all know, Manila is in Asia, and Asia is known as the continent of the youth: in fact there are 750 million of young people living in Asia.

(Music and surroundings)

Romé: Often, if someone is hungry, they stop along the road. Usually, people buy something in the *carinderia*, for example here.

Clara: *Carenderia*?

Romé: The *carinderia* is a mini-restaurant. Here we have chicken adobo; it's cooked in soy sauce. You can taste it if you want. Is it good? Yes, it's good!

Clara: Good!

Text of video 2412M - length: 48'

(Music)

Romé: Here we are in Manila, and as you can see we have the sea. This is Manila Bay.

The Philippines is made up of more than seven thousand islands. There are 187 different languages spoken. The population is characterized by many contrasts. In fact, we have this saying in Tagalog that says: "Tulong tulong taiyo" meaning: "Let's help one another!"

Clara Tulong tulong taiyo! Let's help one another... to make the Genfest happen!

BACKSTAGE GENFEST

Sarah Finch, programme director: The experiences come from all over the world, from all continents, because the theme of this Genfest is "Beyond all Borders". We find boundaries first of all in ourselves, in our limits. But in order to create a united world we must go beyond our limits, even beyond the social and political limits. There are experiences that touch all these topics, told through music, drama, dance, or even simply in their own words.

(Music)

Marcelino Bautista, artistic director: Marcellino: All together, there are 600 performers from all over. We have been preparing for a year. Some days ago we got together, and it was wonderful.

(Music)

The topics show what their borders and limits are now; how they accept these limits, how they overcome them and give this light to others so as to inspire other young people, how to overcome the limits of today.

Victor Lahoz, coordinatore della logistica (in English): Like in a family, in a family not all things go well, but really Chiara taught us well. Even among these things, we always start again.

(Surroundings)

You know, the Genfest is a work, collaboration, because we want to show, the young people want to show that a united world is possible. Behind the scenes, I would say that we have already been a testament of this united world. (Surroundings)

BUKAS PALAD, MANILA

Clara: As well as telling you about the Genfest, we want to show you the life and activities of the Focolare Movement in the Philippines. Rome and I are going to the Bukas Palad social centre. Bukas Palad means Open Hands.

GLYSHERYL B. MAGNA-ONG (in English) I remember the day that I realised just how poor my family was. It was lunchtime and my friends, my classmates, were talking about all the appliances that they had at home and I thought to myself we don't have any appliance at home. I thought I would have to make a lame excuse to get away from them so that they won't have to ask me about it and I would not have to lie.

Text of video 2412M - length: 48'

GAUDENCIA S. BUYOG (in Tagalog) "Although I was poor, I did all I could to send my daughter to school. We ate only noodles, or sometimes dried fish, an egg or some vegetables if we had them. I added a lot of water to the noodles so there would be enough for everyone. Sometimes I did not eat anything myself. I can cope with hunger even if I don't eat for a day. As a mother I did not want to see my children without any food."

GLYSHERYL B. MAGNA-ONG (in English) ... I remember that my mum couldn't pay the rent and the owner of the house decided to remove the ladder from our house because we were living on the second floor. I remember that I had to tread on the nails left from the ladder and I had to climb down like a monkey. So I think it was the lowest point of our lives.

Our neighbour worked at Bukas Palad and she came to our house and asked my mum if I could attend the feeding programme of Bukas Palad since she saw that I was quite thin for my age. So the sponsors and the social workers could give us something to eat. And then a sponsor noticed that I got high grades, then after that she offered to finance my studies, she offered to give me an allowance and some new school supplies. Even though she was a little bit rich, still it took a lot of effort on her part to give me those things so I thought to myself that I really had to repay the goodness that she was showing me.

I had this desire to be the best version of myself. I am now a teacher. I am teaching science and besides being a teacher I am also a subject area coordinator.

GAUDENCIA S. BUYOG (in Tagalog) "Being poor does not mean that you cannot help others. We could not give money but we found many ways of doing little acts of love for our neighbours. This is what I learned."

ROME' (In Italian) The life of Glay and of her mother changed thanks to their meeting Bukas Palad. Since this centre began in 1983, 10,000 families have been helped, who are among the poorest in Manila. 70,000 children have been fed and their health cared for.

Everything began with three young people.

CECILIA M. VILLARAZA (in English) We were just 19, 18, 17 years old. We were just students in the university. At the time there was a very big gap between the rich and the poor. We were gen and we would know that we have to understand what our people need and we would give our time to answer to those needs. I remember that time, people of course did not know us and they would be suspicious but when they felt that we are here only to love them then they started to respond in that way. Rich and poor working together, that's how it started.

ARRIVALS AND THE START OF THE GENFEST

Clara: Thank you!

Karelle Bulan: You're welcome!

Clara: Oh, you speak Italian?

Karelle: Yes.

Clara: What are you doing here?

Text of video 2412M - length: 48'

Karelle: I'm here at the info point.

Clara: Fantastic, we need someone like you to help us do a few interviews. Can you come with us?

Karelle: Sure!

Clara: Let's go! Your name?

Karelle: Karelle.

Clara: Karelle, OK let's go.

Karelle: Where are you from?

Young person: Argentina,

Young person: Argentina,

Young person: Chile,

Two young people together: Melbourne, Australia,

Karelle: Can we see your flag?

Karelle: Where are you from?

Young people: Japan.

Karelle: and this is ... which flag?

Young person: from Greece.

Karelle: Why do you think that the title Beyond All Borders is important, also in the Philippines?

Young person: It's important because I think it is something that can apply to everyone, because it can be something personal, but also within our friendship group, within our family, within our community, within our Movement, within our religion.

(Music and surroundings)

Young person: We are about 60-70-people from all over Oceania, Futuna Island, New Zealand, its amazing!

Karelle: Have a great Genfest!

Music and surroundings

Young person: I think it going to be absolutely amazing. Hardly any of us have had the opportunity to come to this part of the world.

Karelle: Are you excited about the Genfest?

Group: Yes.

Karelle: Where are you from?

Young person: From Nazareth Holy Land.

Karelle: Are you all from Nazareth?

Young person: No, different places,

Young person: Palestine, Bethlehem

Young person: Terra Santa, Haifa.

Karelle: How about you, where are you from?

Text of video 2412M - length: 48'

Group: From the Philippines!

Karelle: And you've already met new friends!

Young person: I am expecting a lot of surprises.

Karelle: Thank you.

Young person: It's a new world for us, another culture, that we are really happy to live this experience, to have this opportunity to meet all these people from all over the world... Also staying together and travelling thousands of miles. I think we're really on top.

Karelle: Can I just greet a friend?

Opening song and greetings

Singer: Let's go. (Applause)

Presenter: Welcome to the Genfest 2018 "beyond all borders"

Presenter: that's nice. Can I hear the people from north, central and South America?

Presenter: Can I hear my people from Africa?

Presenter: Shout out to Asia and the Middle East.

(Music)

M. Martha Barreneche, Youth for a United World (in English): The Genfest for us is a youth expression of hope. It's this life that we already live as Youth for a United world that we bring together in this case here in Manila. We going to share our cultures through songs and dances, also we're going to share our lifestyle, all this negativity that sometimes we see as youth, all this suffering that we feel and see, it's not that we don't live it. It's just that we see it, and we want to change perspective towards it and we want to go beyond. So basically this is what it's all about, sharing this lifestyle and going beyond all borders together.

Azeez (In English from the stage) Before I tell you my story, I want to ask you a question. Think with me for a moment. Has it ever crossed your mind that in any moment: you could lose everything? Suddenly, without warning, in a single day: you lose the home you grew up in... your best friends...your family...your dreams.

Romé When Azeez was 18; a terrorist group arrived in his village, in Iraq. He and his family, along with many others, were forced to flee, abandoning everything they had. Today Azeez and his parents live in France.

Azeez Sadeq, Iraq/France (in English): For me, it's not a suffering. It changed my life, so I'm happy to be part of this experience. God was there and he told me, don't give up. I am with you. So I didn't give up until I am here today.

(Music)

Text of video 2412M - length: 48'

I entrusted myself to Him and decided to live the present moment fully, thinking that if I am able to put a smile on my neighbour's face, I would be making a change despite everything that has happened to me.

(Applause and music)

Song: Tierra de Paz - Our common ground – Gen Verde

PANCHO A's EXPERIENCE.

(Music)

Clara: I have come to just south of Manila. In this city of Muntinlupa is the Bilibid high security prison. It is the largest in the Philippines with over 30,000 inmates. I am meeting Pancho here. 24 years ago he was one of them..."

PANCHO PAYOS: in Tagalog: One of two things can happen to you in prison: you can become worse than before or become a new person.

I was not a good son. I used the money my parents gave me go to out with my friends and drink and sometimes take drugs. At the time we did not know about cocaine and shabu'; we used Corex D because it too gives you a high. It was those feelings that made me go wrong... Until I found myself in prison for homicide.

CLARA: "Pancho is taking me to the candle making factory where he worked straight after being released from prison. During those years behind bars, he really touched rock bottom..."

PANCHO PAYOS in Tagalog: It was a degrading situation. One morning the head warden ordered us to go and fetch water. When we brought back the full buckets, he kicked them all over. "Wow! I said to myself – is this life in prison?" I felt I was worth nothing.

The only thing that gave me peace was going to church. It was there I met the Focolare Movement. Many volunteers came to the prison and read the gospel with us. I remember once a priest said that God loves us, but first I had to forgive myself. How could I do that? That was how little by little I understood that if God loved me I had to forgive myself.

After 4 years and 6 months I came out of prison. If God had not abandoned me when I was in prison, he certainly was not going to abandon me now.

CLARA: "Pancho worked as a labourer, then he was nominated supervisor. When the factory became a cooperative, he reached an unexpected goal..."

PANCHO PAYOS in Tagalog: I became a general manager. Wow! An ex-convict is now running his own business! My dream is to have a business that can help ex-convicts after their experience. The big problem that so many face is finding work. When I came out of prison I had nothing, but I had friends who helped me keep going. You won't get all you pray for or ask for in life. You must work hard and trust in God. But there is always hope, always hope."

Song: So the world may know – Embo Rodriguez

EXPLO

Clara: – Here at the World Trade Centre there is another experience the youth are having: the Explo ...

Erika Ivacson, Curator of the "EXPLO" Exhibition: The Explo is not just an exhibition, but really a great exploration, a multimedia and interactive journey which starts from the individual offering and experience that goes towards a sense of family.

Clara: So it is telling the story of humankind from another point of view: not about wars and conquests but through steps towards peace and friendship between peoples and cultures.
Music)

Romé: Here, as you can see, we are in the Centre of Manila, a huge city where you find skyscrapers together with slums. Often there is no water in the poor people's homes, or electricity. There are no sewers. Waste goes directly in to the waterways of the city. We went to meet Cynthia Funk, she too was a Gen. Now she teaches architecture at St Benild College.

MARIA CYNTHIA Y FUNK (Loli) (in English): Chiara called us with the other gen and then, I still have very much Chiara's words in my heart and mind. She said "to die for my own people" The problems that there are in Manila are made up of these aberrations brought about by pollution of the air, water and a mismanagement of solid wastes and of people not caring. And I think if we do not respond now, it will just keep on going.

As a school, we wanted to respond to it. And so with the students, we tried to discover and understand our situation, and they responded beautifully.

Clara –That was how Professor Funk and her students founded the Waterways Project to clean the waterways of the River Pasiq and improve the lives of the people who live along their banks.

RYAN (in English): Last year we developed this idea of cleaning the waterways with Jumbo technology that could collect the trash, and then collect data at the same time; so we know which parts of the city have the most amount of trash.

Clara – There is more to the project than that... they aim to find a more lasting solution involving the people who live there.

MARIA CYNTHIA Y. FUNK (in English): The School of Design and Arts is in touch with 27 "barangays" or districts. A "barangay" is composed of households, maybe about 600, and maybe one family would have 7 to 10 people in that household.

REYNALDO HABAY HABAY in Tagalog: "All this comes from the other barangays. Part of this waste comes from them because the current sweeps it in our direction and so it all piles up."

MARIA CYNTHIA Y. FUNK (in English)... We have to be able to talk to the people in a way that we don't help them. When we talk to them, we say: "We partner with you".

Text of video 2412M - length: 48'

REYNALDO HABAY HABAY in Tagalog: *“What they said is that we must get together because they can’t do it on their own. All of us who live along the waterways need to work together.”*

Ryan (in English): *When Miss Choi introduced this to me, I was very excited, it’s not just to clean up the waterways, it’s actually to build the community.*

ASIAN NIGHT

Marcellino: Asian night is the welcome given by the Asian young people to those coming from other places. Above all the Filipino youth who are there to welcome the Genfest here for the first time.

(Music and songs from: India – Korea – the Philippines – Pakistan – Indonesia – Taiwan e Greater China – Malaysia)

15. HANDS FOR HUMANITY TRAMO STREET (Clara) + TEMPIO BUDDISTA (Romè)

Romè: Today the Genfest has moved out on to the streets of Manila. This morning the youth participated in 110 different forums, on various topics: bullying, social media, the environment, how to manage personal relationships or workplace relationships.

Clara: This part is called Hands for Humanity, hands for the city. The young people have chosen to do activities showing solidarity and hospitality. Some have gone to clean up the beaches in Manila.

At the moment, for example, we are here now at Mowbuy Temple, a Buddhist temple, where they are having an experience of interreligious dialogue.

PALAWAN – SMALL RESTAURANT “KA INATO”

Erik: *Life is much better when our environment is intact. Our beaches are beautiful. All our surroundings are truly beautiful.*

This eatery - Ka Inato - was conceptualized when I saw how people with disabilities were living in the rural areas. When I learned that there was a high percentage of people that were hearing impaired, I wanted to do something: I told them I would do something to help find employment.

We began the hearing screening.

But I wanted to do more. I could see such great potential. You could see in their eyes the desire to help others. My decision to help the deaf and hearing impaired helped them develop self-confidence and it enabled them to help their families.

Sheryll: *(in sign language) Hi everyone, I am S h e r y l l R i v e r a. Often we pity ourselves because we are not accepted. But we are thankful to the Lord because we are accepted here. This was the first place that offered us employment. We are thankful to Mr. Eric for this privilege.*

Erik: *Sheryll is our first female employee. She is a very talented person, quick to learn and with a lot of initiative. Whatever is asked of her she does it well.*

Text of video 2412M - length: 48'

Sheryll (In sign language)

Previously my family were in financial difficulty. Now that I have this job I can help with expenses. I remember the night that I cried, praying for the deaf because we were not able to find work. I want all of us to be successful in life. Don't waste your time. Always remember how hard your family worked for you. I know it's hard but be brave in facing this reality.

Erik: *Chiara Lubich is one of my spiritual advisers. In my heart I felt she was telling me "the only thing you need is to share your love today". It is not something you can buy. It's a gift from God that every day we put into practice.*

Sheryll: *To my fellow persons with a disability, let us continue to pray for the hearing, to open their hearts to people like us.*

Erik: *We realized that we gave an opportunity to someone... to have new hope.*

Words of Sheryll Rivera on screen: "As someone who is hearing impaired, my life is not easy, but by using my remaining senses I do my best to adapt to the world. " Sheryll Rivera

ICT - GENFEST SOCIAL MEDIA TEAM

Pao Pagan, ICTEAM – Social Media in English) – ICT stands for International Communications Team. What we do here is - we produce videos, and creative materials like social cards, for the different platforms to communicate the Genfest. I think something really unique about our team is that we are from different countries, from different backgrounds, but we all work as one team, and we all try to produce the best materials for the paths we want to spread this Genfest to.

JEAN PAUL'S EXPERIENCE

Jean Paul: When I woke up, I realized that I couldn't move my body from my chest down to my legs.

Clara: Egide is from Rwanda and Jean Paul from Burundi. They met in tragic circumstances. At a bus stop Jean Paul was mugged and was nearly killed. Egide saved him, took him to the hospital and helped him for months.

Egide: I decided to leave my job and help Jean Paul full time.

Clara: It seemed that Jean Paul would not walk again ...It was also with the help of the Youth for a United World that he was able to recover

Jean Paul: And in the end the miracle happened! I started to walk with two crutches, and within a year, I could walk with one.

Text of video 2412M - length: 48'

Jean Paul backstage: Egide is Rwandan, so the fact that he helped me and did all this was not easy and not to be taken for granted.

Jean Paul: I thank God. He kept me strong and gave me the courage not to quit. I have also been able to forgive those who beat me up.

Jean Paul: "On the cross Jesus said to forgive, because they do not know what they are doing. In the Focolare Movement we are taught to love all our enemies too. If I don't, I am just like the others. It sometimes happens that I meet my enemy. It was then that I found the courage to forgive."

Song: Nos Couleurs et nos saveurs – Gen Fuoco

EMMAUS GREETING AND CONCLUSION

Maria Voce, President of the Focolare Movement: Chiara challenged you to be men and women of unity, people who know how to carry in their hearts the specific treasures of each culture and give them to others: to be global men and women.

...

We know that the visible part of an iceberg sits on a part that is under water. Similarly, being one family is built up through many ordinary deeds and actions carried out in the strong conviction that the most powerful means we can use to renew the world is our own heart.

While our heart is still beating, we can love, we can start again and we can share. A universal family starts with my heart, with our hearts.

This is the fascinating challenge we want to take on together so that a united world becomes a dream fulfilled.

Thank you very much, and coraggio!

Clara: So we've just listened to Emmaus and the Genfest is ending. Romè, how did it go?

Romé: You know, Clara, here in Asia we say: "You don't analyse the rhythm, you enter into it. You don't analyse the rhythm, you just follow it. This is what happened here at the Genfest. All these young people have entered the "rhythm" of Asia. For us Filipinos, it was truly a great honour to have the Genfest here. Chiara's message of unity to us is one we can now launch it out into the world.

Clara: so we will end this special link up. Thanks to everyone for following us.

Clara and Romé: Bye to everyone from Manila. Bye!

Genfest song and credits:

SPECIAL CH Conference Call from Manila – Genfest 2018 "Beyond all borders"

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