

(Translation of video 2448M)

CH CONFERENCE CALL
Rocca di Papa, 23/02/2019

“From Jerusalem to the world”

1. Opening and greetings

2. In dialogue with Francisco Canzani and Joseph Assouad

3. Jerusalem: A city for all

Hearing from those who live there gives hope for the most contested city on earth; a different vision from the one in the news.

4. The Holy Land: Stories of dialogue

Anna Maria, Jessica and Talat: testimony to friendship among people from the three monotheistic religions. When the walls of distrust and prejudice fall down, you experience that it's possible to look to the future with courage and hope.

5. Jerusalem: the "International Centre for Unity and Peace"

Peace can be built in a thousand different ways. Sometimes you also need places in which to meet – a place for dialogue, spirituality, study and formation. The Focolare's project for Jerusalem.

6. In dialogue with Francisco Canzani and Joseph Assouad (cont.)

7. Linked up with Panama: after the WYD

8. East Africa: Together for a new Africa

January 2019. In the Focolare's little town near Nairobi (Kenya) over 100 young people from 7 countries met for a training for leadership course.

9. Co-Governance: co-responsibility in cities today

By 2050 70% of the world's population will live in cities. The challenges and opportunities to be faced were the subject of an international congress held from 17th-20th January at the Mariapolis Centre at Castel Gandolfo.

10. In dialogue with Maria Voce (Emmaus) and Jesús Morán

11. Chiara Lubich: "If you say so, I will lower the nets"

Rocca di Papa, 21st December 1982. From the recording of Chiara Lubich's commentary on the Word of Life for February 1983 (Cf. Lk 5:5)

12. Conclusion

1. OPENING AND GREETINGS

(Music)

Chiara Lubich: *Now, dear everyone, we're going on a trip around the world. It will be quite long because the world is rather big.*

Eli Folonari: *linked up with Switzerland, Palmira.*

Palmira: *Yes Eli, ciao Chiara.*

Eli: *Buenos Aires.*

Voices: *Chiara we are with you!!*

Chiara: *Sounds like they're here!*

Chiara: *We are linked up with the whole world in a conference call, where I give a spiritual thought, something strong that we can all live together, and then one of my companions, Eli who you always see with me, gives the news of what has been happening during the month so that it all belongs to everyone, all to everyone.*

(Music)

As you can see, there is something new. I've not only got Eli beside me but also Marco, Marco Aquini, and I'd like him to represent the young people first of all.

Eli: *Here's Chiara*

Chiara: *Hello! Ciao!*

Voices: *Ciao Chiara!*

Tamara: Hello and welcome. We could not start without remembering two people who worked closely with Chiara for the conference call. Eli Folonari, who accompanied her from the start and Marco Aquini. Both of them left this life recently. We are very thankful to them!
(Applause)

So let's start. My name is Tamara Pastorelli and I am Italian. I am married to Francesco who is here with us and we come from beautiful Tuscany, from Arezzo. Allow me to say hello to my friends who are watching us. I work in the communications office of the international little town of Loppiano. Hello to them too! (Applause)

Let's start. I remind you that as always you can send your impressions, ideas and photos to these contacts: the email address, the Facebook page and this telephone number¹.

2. IN DIALOGUE WITH FRANCISCO CANZANI AND JOSPEH ASSOUD

Tamara: Tonight, here beside me are Francisco Canzani and Joseph Assouad.

¹ These are seen on the screen

Francisco, you are an expert on ecumenism, on Jewish-Christian dialogue, while you, Joseph, are a doctor and have lived for some years in Jerusalem.

Both are members of the General Council of the Focolare Movement, which is made up of about 70 people who represent all the realities of the Movement in the world. Many of them are here today, so welcome! And we also welcome all the members of the Abba School. (Applause)

Francisco and Joseph, you have been with the whole General Council and you have just returned from the Holy Land where you have spent a week of retreat and pilgrimage. A large part of this Link up will be dedicated to Jerusalem and the Holy Land.

Francisco, can you share your immediate impressions of what this trip meant to you?

Francisco Canzani: Immediate impressions. The first thing is the encounter with Jesus. It is difficult to go to the Holy Land and not meet Jesus, who walked in those places. A second word that comes to my mind is work because we spent three days at the Ecumenical Institute at Tantur working with the whole General Council on important topics for the Movement: the communion of goods, work, the Economy of Communion and all that has to do with that area. We've dedicated this year to deepen this aspect. Then the young people.

I went to Panama with Jesús Morán and many others who are here, so we had the reality of young people very much at heart when we arrived there. The whole day dedicated to young people was very important indeed for the whole General Council. We wanted to study this reality to see how to live better with the young people in the Movement.

Then we worked on matters related to the next Assembly 2020, the most important aspects.

The third point for me was meeting the people in the Holy Land. First with the community of the Focolare Movement there and then also with some important religious leaders: the Lutheran bishop Younan, Rabbi Kronish, the Apostolic Administrator Monsignor Pierbattista Pizzaballa, who gave us an intense, powerful, truthful and frank view of what they are living, the challenges, joys and hopes in that land.

We spent days of work and pilgrimage following the path of Jesus, in the footsteps of Jesus. We also visited the holy places. But more than holy places the beautiful thing was living and walking with Jesus in the midst in the Holy Land. It was a pilgrimage with him, because the Council didn't go there just to make a trip, but to be with Jesus for the sake of the whole Movement. So it was important for us, but for everyone else too, I think.

3. JERUSALEM: CITY FOR ALL

Tamara: At this point, we will start our journey precisely from Jerusalem.

Nadine Soudah, Biology Student – Jerusalem (in English)

Everything is separated in Jerusalem. Jewish and Arabs.

Many are raised to hate the other side, and to have prejudices against the other side.

So it's very hard to keep hoping and to keep believing in peace.

Stefania Tanesini *The white "Jerusalem Stone" with which many peoples have built this city down through the centuries, accompanies us on our way. If it were possible, the Holy City*

seems even more complex here than the one we are used to seeing from afar; it seems even more of a mystery.

Jerusalem is not an easy place. The temptation is to see only what the headlines tell you almost on a daily basis: attacks and violence that involve Jews and Palestinians, and the struggle by Christians to stay in the holy places.

Is that the whole story? How many Jerusalems are there? Is there room for hope in the most contested city on earth?

Rabbi Dr. Ron Kronish, – Jerusalem (in English)

Unfortunately, it's a very divided city. So East Jerusalem is mostly Palestinians. West Jerusalem is mostly Jews. We have... approximately 30 per cent of the people living in Jerusalem are Palestinian Arabs: Muslim and Christian; that means about 70 per cent are Jewish. And this sometimes creates frictions especially when there is violence and there is a feeling sometimes that both sides don't know another well enough and we would like to do more...

Sari Nusseibeh, professor of Philosophy, University of Al-Quds – Jerusalem (in English)

Living as a Palestinian in particular in Jerusalem. There's a constant sense of having a heavy weight on my shoulders or on my brains because, as you may know, we have constantly lots of problems. But they are life problems, economic problems, financial problems, legal problems that, you know, I hear about with different people in the city. ...

So I have a very strange feeling for Jerusalem: on the one hand I love Jerusalem, but, on the other hand, Jerusalem also makes me angry, for what it is now.

Stefania Tanesini: (in Italian)

There are days when it is hard to move around the Old City with its crowds of tourists and pilgrims. In the space of less than one square kilometre you pass from the Jewish Quarter to the Christian Quarter, from the Muslim Quarter to the Armenian Quarter.

It's Friday evening and the Muslim holy day is drawing to an end, while the Jewish Sabbath is just beginning. Who does this city belong to? A French historian wrote that the Holy City does not belong to anyone, not even to itself. It is a city where the entire world meets from time to time to dialogue and take stock.

Bishop Pierbattista Pizzaballa, Apostolic Administrator of the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem: (in Italian) *I am convinced of something now, after 30 years' experience in Jerusalem. That the Lord has put us here on purpose.*

People often say we are condemned to live together. The challenge is to transform that sentence into a blessing. We are continually called to rediscover our reasons for staying here. None of us can decide something without the others. This is what the city is condemned to, but its vocation too.

Sari Nusseibeh (in English)

It's a distance you can cross; you have to cross, to go to the other side and try to see things from that point of view. And very often when you make that journey, I think the relations between yourself and the other become more peaceful, more comfortable for the two of you. And I think, to go back to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, I always felt that this is something we needed to do. I needed on my part ... to understand Israel and to understand who they are and

why they do what they do, and I am hoping, of course, that they do the same in this direction. But it's something that needs to be done.

S. E. Munib Younan, Emeritus bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jerusalem in English
When God had taken Jerusalem to be the place of his dwelling, He meant it to be a place where we can glorify God together and not be enemies. This is the reason. We have to give everyone their own justice. We have to respect the historical status quo of every religion in Jerusalem. ...

We have really to allow Jerusalem to be a place where we can feel that there is faith, not only religion. There is too much religion in Jerusalem but little faith.

Stefania Tanesini: (in Italian)

Jerusalem is now the largest city in the Holy Land, with a population of almost 900,000. Outside the Old City, old meets new, in a mix of sacred and modern.

Rabbi Ron Kronish (in English)

It's a beautiful city. It's a city of hope and a promise for a better future as well as a city of daily life. In the Jewish tradition we talk about the heavenly Jerusalem and the earthly Jerusalem. Sometimes the earthly Jerusalem is quite difficult and we would like it to be closer to the heavenly Jerusalem. But it's a city of both.

4. HOLY LAND: STORIES OF DIALOGUE

Tamara: Joseph, for some years you were in Jerusalem, you have lived in this unique city. What was it like living there?

Joseph Assouad: I was there in the early '90s, and going back now was very nice, to meet many old friends again and walk on those same streets. Much has changed. The old city is the same, but going out from there I could no longer find the streets [I knew]. There are new roads and tunnels that were not there before. So it was very nice for me to return to this place where the stones speak. Wherever you walk, you can really feel that there is a supernatural reality in this place.

The best thing for me going there now was that I visited many places that I knew very well and that I had taken many other people to visit. But this time, going there all together was a very beautiful experience of unity. And in the end, coming back here, I felt different, something has changed in me.

Tamara: Let's stay in the Holy Land and let's get to know some stories of the people who live in this very complex reality. Let's watch the video.

Anna Maria Karram, Head of a High School in Haifa (in Arabic) *I was born into an Arab-Christian family and my education revolved around that all my life. Our house was in an area where there were many Jews and that's why we always practised our Christian faith in its true nature, by being open to everyone. I work as the Head of a private school in Haifa. Our students are both Christian and Muslim, at the moment 50% of each. One of my aims in teaching is to develop dialogue because I see it's not what society in general is interested in.*

With the younger children in the primary school, we tried to practice the Golden Rule which says "Do to others as you would have them do to you".

I have a very good relationship with the Head of another school, who is Muslim. We believe in our work; we want to teach the new generations to be more open to dialogue and more accepting of others.

Talat Shatroubi, Head of a Middle School in Fureidis (in Arabic) It all started when I met Anna in 2001. I did not know what faith she professed or what the Focolare was. We were just two colleagues sitting at the same table at a working meeting, but I was struck by her calmness and the way she tackled problems. We didn't talk about dialogue; it was already dialogue, a conversation that made you want to get to know someone better.

Jessica Sacks, translator – Giva't Shmuel (in English) I am married. I have two children. And here in Giv'at Shmuel almost everyone without exception is Jewish and most people are really living very similar lives, religious majority, bringing up children, very similar concerns. It's very convenient but it's very impoverished, it's a very impoverished life. I spend my working life translating the Bible and I think peace is very very central to what we what we aspire to and what we live for and what we pray for as Jews. To be an Orthodox Jew is very difficult question to answer because this is how my life has always been, but I would say that it's a life of trying to do God's will. The Sabbath is very important to us every, every Saturday we don't work, and we're at home with family and friends who come to the house and we pray in the synagogue.

Anna Maria (in Arabic) During the conflict in Gaza in 2009 we had the idea of organising a prayer evening for Jews, Muslims and Christians.

Talat (in Arabic) We went into a church and saw the candles that had been lit by the Jews and by the Christians. We might have been the only Muslims. Someone was filming and that meant other people would see me... a Muslim from an Arab village with Christians and Jews. What would they say about me? That evening we did not talk about dialogue. We just prayed and that was it.

The great leap forward happened in Italy, when I came to Rome and met people of many different religions. The strangest thing of all was meeting Jews who lived near me but whom I saw in a different way. Suddenly I found myself with Jessica at the evening meal, sitting at the same table. It was a problem for me. Should I speak first or not? Would she begin? What did she see me as? An Arab, a Palestinian, or a Jew?

Jessica (in English) I asked if he could sit and have lunch together and of course you know Talah't was very open to that and very very friendly. I didn't need to be afraid. And you know we sat down together and you know we introduced each other and I said: "Listen, I got a problem I want to tell you what the problem is". And he said no stop there, don't say "a problem", say "I have a challenge" and you know so I laughed and I told him what my challenge was and we had a good conversation.

Talat (in Arabic) I'm sure that meeting Jessica was what gave me a new understanding; in the sense that we grew up thinking that practicing Jews don't like Arabs. There was a wall blocking our communication with them and that wall fell down.

Jessica (in English) We went to visit, brought my husband along with me, to visit Talat and Noha and it's the first time I've been to Fureidis where they live, I wouldn't usually have a reason to go there. And ... you know it's, things like that don't make all the difference in the world but you have a friend you have another friend you have another ally.

Anna Maria (in Arabic) Very often things are difficult but if we keep in training and try to see even our enemies with new eyes, I believe that love is contagious and so something will surely change.

Jessica (in English) We have much more in common than we have different. But in Israel that's much more complex.

One day the time of peace will come. I think in the dialogue we are just keeping the fire, keeping the fire alight, keeping the peace warm, so that when the time comes we'll know, we'll know what to do with it. Our children will know.

Anna Maria (in Arabic) It wouldn't be truthful to say I am always calm, especially in situations like that. Life in Haifa is a bit easier and we're not so aware of the problem. But when we go out or see things on TV, you immediately want to judge others, but I try not to be influenced by these things.

Talat (in Arabic) Maybe God wants me to be an instrument. Chiara began when she was young and you can see how far she got. She got as far as Fureidis; she reached this place and the whole world. So I can't lose hope. We may not see peace in our day, but it will come.

5. JERUSALEM: THE CENTRE FOR UNITY AND PEACE

Tamara: Peace... Peace can be built in many ways, talking together while sitting at a table, by opening our homes as we have just seen. But sometimes you also need places where people can meet and be able to dialogue. Especially in Jerusalem.

Nadine Soudah, Biology Student – Jerusalem (in English) I think that the one thing missing in Jerusalem is a point of interactions between Arabs and Israelis. There should be a place where they can both come together. And just talk. And people when they talk ... friendship will happen.

Stefania: (in Italian) Nadine is 26. She is studying biology at the University and grew up here in Jerusalem. She dreams of a peaceful future for her city, a future which she hopes to see with her own eyes.

Nadine (in English) Looking on Jerusalem, I hope that one day we will all really live in peace, where there would be no separation anymore that I would feel very comfortable to go to a Jewish neighbourhood and to have Israeli friends, to go together to a restaurant and share our cultures.

Stefania: (in Italian) We are just outside the walls of the city of Jerusalem and tradition tells us that Jesus himself walked down these ancient Roman steps, after the last supper, on his way to the Garden of Olives. And that in this very place he prayed for unity, "Father, that they may all be one".

Chiara Lubich came to Jerusalem for the first time in 1956 and spent time at these steps. Her deepest wish was that a centre for dialogue and unity could be built here.

Stefania: (in Italian) In the 1980s it became possible to buy some land close to what are now well known as the "stone steps" and the dream of building a centre in this place became a reality. The "International Centre for Unity and Peace" has a very clear mandate from Chiara: it is to be a place of spirituality, study, dialogue and training. It will be open to people of different ages, cultures, beliefs and backgrounds; its aim is to encourage mutual encounter and understanding, and to foster authentic relationships.

The plans show a building with a variety of spaces, designed to host meetings and events of different kinds, whether local or international.

It will be on two floors covering a total of 1,180 square meters. The auditorium will be on the lower ground floor, while the roof and terraces will blend into the landscape.

The plans also include the area outside, about 8,000 square meters, where there will be lawns, benches and places designed to foster encounter and interaction.

Therese Soudah, Focolare – Jerusalem (in Hebrew)

I think a centre for peace and unity can make a great contribution to the Focolare Movement, to the Church and to society as a whole. ... A centre that brings together different peoples and religions, right here in Jerusalem, where there is division and conflict.

Bishop Pierbattista Pizzaballa, Apostolic Administrator of the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem:

(in Italian) When I heard the Focolare was going to build this new centre, my first thought was: let's hope it will be something new and different, that can really make a difference. We need to form the local community in terms of trust, dialogue and genuine encounter. I hope it will be a centre that has something to say not only to the foreigners who come but to the 'locals' who welcome them.

Sari Nusseibeh (in English) An institution that builds bridges I think has to be one that allows for the creation of this genuine journey of understanding, a genuine journey of crossing the distance between oneself and the other. That means psychology, education, religious understanding...

Rabbi Ron Kronish (in English) What's unique in this project is the creation of a space in Jerusalem for people of all faiths to meet together on an on-going basis, both inside and outside, both formally and informally. I would say that Jerusalem has been looking for a place like this for many years. And now we will have one and it will be a great contribution to our city.

6. IN DIALOGUE WITH FRANCISCO CANZANI AND JOSEPH ASSOUD (CONT'D.)

Tamara: What you have just seen is the project to fulfil Chiara's dream. For now it is just a 3D graphic, so it will have to go from virtual to real. Making it happen will depend on us.

Today, we want to officially launch a large fund raising campaign, a global communion of goods. How can we participate in it?

You can go to this address of the web page of the "International Centre for Unity and Peace", which is: icupj.org

Which stands for: International Centre for Unity and Peace - Jerusalem.

Once you are on the page, you will find all the information about the centre and the project.

In the menu, at the top right, you will find the item "Build with us". There you will find all the information on how to make a contribution. You can see it on the screen. A first option is to make a donation to this bank account.

Then we are sure that creativity will suggest us many other ways to contribute and also to make this project known to many others.

Joseph, during your stay in Jerusalem you went with the whole Council to visit the land where the Centre will be built and the community in the Holy Land were there too. Emmaus did something important in placing a medal as a first sign. What contribution can this Centre make to Jerusalem?

Joseph: It's a fantastic Centre because first of all it's a dream. When I was there in the '90s, it had already been going on since 1980, as you heard. We wanted to have a centre but there were so many bureaucratic problems, also for archaeological reasons. It is only now that almost everything is in place to start it. So it's a dream for all of us.

Moreover, this Centre covers 8000 square meters, and in Jerusalem if you have 500 you are already happy. To have 8000 square meters in Jerusalem, 300 meters from the walls of the old city, is truly a gift from the Eternal Father.

Then the Centre is between the Jewish side and the Arab side. This is very important because the Arabs won't feel that they have to go to the Jews, nor the Jews.... By going there everyone will feel like they are still at home. So it is truly a place that God has designed for this project, a project for dialogue between Jews, Muslims and Christians, in that very strategic place that is Jerusalem. This is about the place.

About dialogue, since I am from the Middle East - I realize more and more that dialogue is not an option, it is a duty, a necessity. We cannot go on without dialogue; the world cannot go ahead if we do not dialogue together. So having a Centre where people can meet is so important.

This dialogue already exists because we have seen that there are Jews who know us, Muslims who know us. Even outside the Holy Land there are so many friendships with Jews and Muslims. So now having a place where to meet is very important; we cannot dialogue on the street, we must have a place. This is what's needed to keep going.

What's more, you saw in the video that the Centre is very beautiful. It's welcoming, you can rest, we can get to know each other. Of course, it's good to study and to have conferences, but if there are no fraternal relationships ... Having such a welcoming place in the middle of the city will help build fraternity.

So I said to myself that it's a dream for all those who want to build peace and fraternity in the Middle East and also in the world.

Tamara: That's right. Francisco, instead for those of us who do not live in Jerusalem, what meaning, what value does this Centre have?

Francisco: I believe the video said a great deal. Jerusalem is a microcosm with all the challenges that come there and start there. But it is also the city of hope, not only because it is the city of Jesus' resurrection and therefore of definitive hope, but also because it is the city of

encounter, really a meeting place between the three monotheistic religions. So it's a great opportunity to witness to unity and peace that must reach everyone. Perhaps now it is limited to specialists, to leaders in the different religions, but it must reach the people. And this Centre will be a great opportunity for the laity, for the people - as Joseph said now - to meet and be together.

It will be beautiful also for us who come from outside. But we must do all we can to enable the local people to meet there.

Tamara: Thanks!

7. LINKED UP WITH PANAMA: AFTER THE WYD

Tamara: We're going to Panama now, to the world Youth Day with Pope Francis, which took place in January.

Pope Francis in Panama: Dear friends, you have made great sacrifices to come and meet here. ... In this way you will become masters and craftspeople of the culture of encounter.

Tamara: Francisco, you again, you are from Uruguay.

Francisco: Yes. I'm from Uruguay

Tamara: ... and you were in Panama for the World Youth Day

Francisco: I was in Panama.

Tamara: In your opinion, what did this WYD mean for the Latin American continent, which is said to be the continent of hope?

Francisco: It's a hard question. For me, it's as though the whole Church but [especially] the Pope was looking at this continent, with its sorrows, challenges and hopes. The Way of the Cross on Friday with Pope Francis was very meaningful. In each of the 15 stations that the Way of the Cross has, there was a suffering of Latin America: from drug trafficking to human trafficking, extreme poverty, marginalization, etc. Each suffering was connected with a specific people, one of the Latin American peoples, and with a face, the face of Mary, because the whole WYD was centred on that phrase of Mary: "Let it be with me according to your word."

Pope Francis in his direct relationship with the youth, that was so powerful and incisive, asked at a certain point: "But do you have the courage to carry hope within you like Mary did and to believe in the transforming power of love?"

The answers to these questions could not be taken for granted at all, because it asks a lot and the whole WYD was a great act of faith that love can transform reality in a radical way, even a complex reality like that of Latin America.

So it was the Pope's meeting with young people, and the meeting of young people among themselves, and the meeting of young people with God, because there were times of contemplation I would say, very sublime moments when all of us there - I'm not young but I was there with them - met God directly, and this is something that remains forever.

Tamara: At this point let's go over to the young people in Panama. Dustin and Zulay are linked up with us. There's Dustin and Zulay who attended and contributed to the 34th

World Youth Day. The motto was, as Francisco said, “Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word.”

Hi Zulay, hi Dustin!

All: Ciao!

Tamara: Zulay, after the World Youth Day with Pope Francis you organised an event that you called “Love without borders”. What was it about and who was there?

Zulay: It was a meeting for nearly 300 young people between the ages of 15 and 30 from Mexico, Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Argentina, Uruguay, Brazil and Panama...

The aim was to deepen the experience we had during World Youth Day with the Pope. The talk Jesus Moran gave us on the first day helped us see how to apply what Pope Francis’ said to our own lives and how to put them into practice in society today.

Dustin: The programme we organised, as young people of the Focolare in Central America, focused on Mary, because she was the key figure at the WYD.

Francisco Canzani and other speakers showed us Mary as someone who travels with us and is a model of how to live, thanks to her “yes” to God.

The vocation: Above all the vocation to love and to serve, emphasised by the testimony from people of different vocations.

The presence of Gen Verde was really important; they helped us for all three days with their songs, experiences and workshops.

Tamara: Zulay, What was your own experience?

Zulay: It was much better than I thought! After those few days I took away the fact that Mary’s yes helps me not to be afraid and to say ‘yes’ to God whatever he asks of me, every day.

Tamara: I heard you also transformed your yes into something very practical...

Dustin: We saw that the *Pathways for a United World* project launched at the Genfest is a very practical way of living this vocation to love. We raised funds first of all for Cuba and over the next two months we want to encourage a world-wide communion of goods for Venezuela.

Tamara: Thanks Dustin, thank you Zulay! We too are continuing to follow the difficult

Dustin: Thanks to you. Bye!

Tamara: Bye (applause) You heard our applause. We too are continuing to follow the difficult situation in Venezuela and we hope for a positive solution, especially for all the people who have been living in this situation for so long. We are thinking of you.

8. LINKED UP WITH EAST AFRICA: TOGETHER FOR A NEW AFRICA

Tamara: We’re going now to Kenya, to Nairobi. In January a very special course was run here for young leaders from different African countries. It’s the first time anything like this has happened. It was called “Together for a New Africa”.

Melchior Nsavyimana (in English)

The idea of “Together for new Africa” came when we were at Sophia University with the young people from Africa, studying at Sophia in Loppiano. There we were discussing about African challenges. And we were saying: we are living a good experience here in Sophia, but how can we transmit this experience to other young people from Africa?”

We organized a training where we invited young people coming from seven countries. Burundi, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uganda, Kenya, RDC Congo and South Sudan. One hundred and seven young people accompanied by their tutors.

It was also important to know the composition because that was the key. So the first challenge was division.

For instance, the relation between our countries, Burundi and Rwanda they are not talking to each other. Congolese and Rwandese they know that they are like enemies. To see all of them, sitting together, discussing and discovering how beautiful they are! This was for us a first challenge and then now go through also how to become a leader. It means to build this dialogue; we need to be bridge not break the dialogue. That is the point to start because the project is for three years.

Amandine Irakoze (in French) *I understood that I too can do my part, by putting into practice the values they taught us: the value of Ubuntu [which means I am because we are]; the value of listening; of behaving as wise people (we talked a lot about wisdom). I understood that through these values we can build up new behaviours for a new Africa.*

Melchior (in English) *We are at the beginning but you can see that our objective has been achieved in some way. Even if the way is still long.*

Tamara: Esther Wambui works as an expert in institutional communications and she attended the course on “Together for a new Africa”. We asked for her impressions:

Tamara: *Esther can you tell us why have you participated to this seminar?*

Esther: *The reason I have participated in the “Together for a new Africa” program is because I am a leader in my own capacity, I am the kind of a person who is inspired by always leading the way, doing what I can to change the space that I am in, in whatever capacity that I am in.*

Tamara: But now how does this commitment for a new Africa continue?

Esther: *The way it is structured is that all the participants in the different countries are supposed to come up with projects and programmes and activities, to carry out in their home countries and work together towards the achievement of the dream through day to day operations even in the political aspect of leadership which is an aspect that is really ailing the African continent.*

Tamara: Ciao Ester! Thank you! (Applause)

9. CO-GOVERNANCE: CO-RESPONSIBILITY IN CITIES TODAY

Tamara: Now we move to a new subject and let’s think for a moment about the cities we live in and how different things would be if they were governed not only by local authorities, but if there was more active involvement on the part of everyone. This is what happening in the stories we will see now.

Paolo Balduzzi (in Italian):

When the first powered aircraft flew in 1903 less than 20% of the world population lived in urban areas. By 2050 it will be 70%.

(Music)

Urbanization is a reality that has both positive and negative aspects. How can these be managed and addressed? We need to work together: local government, business and citizens.

Co-governance: governing together is a project that brought together for an international conference council workers, town planners, citizens and students. It took place from 17th-20th January at Castel Gandolfo near Rome.

Man (In Italian) I come from Arzano in Italy and I am leader of the local Council.

Girl: (in German) I come from Vienna in Austria and I studied politics.

Man: (in Hungarian): My name is János Kövári, and I work in local government in Récs in Hungary.

Woman: (In Portuguese): I am parliamentary commissioner at the town hall in my city.

Jo Spiegel, mayor of Kingersheim (in French): There are specific places where you study, do sport, or work. But it isn't the same for democracy except for a small room in the town hall. Something is missing. Democracy isn't only to do with elections; it's about every day, each one of us and all together. That was why I decided to build a « citizens house ». This building does for democracy what an anvil does for a smith. It is where you work. The place is open to all the groups engaged in practical democracy, because democracy cannot be improvised.

Paolo Balduzzi: Federick Restrepo-Posada is a civil engineer, after working for many years in the city of Medellin in Colombia; he was put in charge of the regional development plan.

Federico Restrepo-Posada – “Compromiso ciudadano”, Medellín, Colombia (in Spanish): The region included areas where there was the greatest poverty and violence and the most marginalisation. We worked for four years to build better connections and create a centre for university formation in the zone, not in Medellin but there with a public university, the University of Antiochia. Lastly, working with other sectors in society, businesses and NGOs we drew up a development plan that could make this region really improve.

Paolo Balduzzi: Problems aren't solved by complaints. Every citizen can become a change maker. This is what happened to Anna Maria Panarotto.

Anna Maria Panarotto “The mums against pfas group” Vicenza Italia (in Italian) Since when I was a young person in the Movement, I remember Chiara asked us to “die for our own people”. It has always been natural for me to get involved in the problem issues, especially the local ones.

Part of a broadcast from Vicenza News (In Italian) Pollution by toxic substances and shock figures in recent regional screenings are worrying mothers of children resident in the contaminated areas.

Paolo Balduzzi: Blood samples from young people in the area showed a high percentage of a toxic substance in the groundwater sources.

Anna Maria Panarotto A group of mums got together to share their worries and first of all their anger. Then they wanted to do something. Now there are thousands of us and we work

together with other groups, well known environmental groups. But what sets us apart is that we decided we wanted dialogue. We prepared well beforehand.

First we were in dialogue with our mayors, then with the region, then we went quite often to the Ministry. Then we went to the European Parliament. We don't want our action to be confined, as if we were only interested in our own groundwater. We don't want other people to have the problem we have had. We must avoid this.

Paolo Balduzzi: People talk about smart cities, the most recent trend in town planning which improves the quality of life in cities also through technology. It is the digital era, but maybe things are a good bit more complex than they seem.

Fadi Chehadé UN Secretary General's High Level Panel on Digital Cooperation USA (in English): The more connected we think we are digitally; we actually seem to be less connected humanly. I think smart cities need to reinvent themselves more as living cities not just as technically connected cities. We need new value mechanisms that would allow the system to accept that we will embed values in every step of building our new digital world. We need to create something like a technocratic oath so that every kid who is writing a game, every engineer who works for a big company designing an algorithm to control some aspect of data, every scientist dreaming up the next invention, is actually vested with a set of common values.

Paolo Balduzzi: There's us and the others, the right and the left. There are many opposites in conflict with each other or in danger of not meeting at all. These fill our lives, our days, our relationships and even our parliaments.

Jeong woo Kil (in Korean) My name is Kil Jeong-Woo, and I belong to the majority party (party in power).

Park Soon-Hyon, former member of National Assembly Republic of Korea (in Korean) My name is Park Soon-Hyon and I am a member of the opposition party. I think that Parliament is a place for debate, which can be passionate but must never degenerate into physical violence.

Kil Jeong-Woo I'd say that this is why the Movement for Policies and Politics for Unity has established the "Correct political language" prize to encourage politicians to use morally appropriate language. Every year we award this prize to emphasise the importance of "purifying" the language used in the world of politics.

Park Soon-Hyon If I insist on other people accepting my opinions, and my way of thinking, that's when quarrels start and you feel insecure and see there is no unity. It is good to be aware of the difference the other person represents and go one step at a time, towards unity. That is why I think the MPPU can make a great contribution.

Sergio Previdi, MPPU Brazil (in Portuguese) Differences don't make us poor. Our differences become our enrichment. Democracy presupposes dialogue. So when we enable dialogue, each of us makes a contribution.

Luiz Carlos Hauly, Member of Parliament, Brazil (in Portuguese) The foundation is tolerance and understanding. I have always been a fighter. I was always hard and categorical about things. When I heard Chiara Lubich talk about Jesus forsaken I understood. I have to forgive my enemy, my adversary. "My God, that's difficult!" But that day was a turning point for me. The burden left me and I felt free.

Emilce Cuda, Theologian Argentina (in Spanish) Nowadays the word spirituality has lost its meaning and often simply means avoiding reality, being virtuous enough to control your feelings and emotions. Nonetheless, spirituality is about relationships. If we were to define it in

modern political terms, spirituality is the people, the city, because it is about people in relation to each other, linked with one another and to life itself.

Letizia De Torre, MPPU (in Italian) Co-governance is a journey not a meeting. It is a great idea and the outcome of a huge amount of work by many people

Paolo Balduzzi: The event ended with the formulation of a "Pact for a new governance". Nonetheless, the text is not set in stone, but is rather an "encouragement" to get involved, to build and network. Governing together therefore, depends on me, it depends on you, it depends on all of us.

10. IN DIALOGUE WITH MARIA VOCE (EMMAUS) AND JESÚS MORÁN

Tamara: Emmaus, Jesús, welcome!

Jesús: Thank you!

Tamara: Let's go back with you to the beginning, from where we left, from Jerusalem, and on your journey.

Jesús, what did you bring home from this experience?

Jesús: I think everything has already been said with the videos, impressions and comments from Joseph and Francisco. But primarily, I would say prayer - as Francisco said - because in Jerusalem everything speaks of God, so even the stones speak. It's not about times of prayer, it is that being there, you pray, you pray always. I also tried praying at night outdoors, imagining how Jesus did it.

When you are in Jerusalem, especially in the Holy Land, but above all in Jerusalem, you have a clear perception that history has been lived out here, and here too is the history of the relationship between humanity and God, and between God and humanity, with all its consequences in the social, political and cultural levels.

This is the paradox of the Holy Land, the paradox of Jerusalem, that even if everything is separate - as we have seen - there is a unique possibility to have unity, there is such a concentration of culture, religion and spirituality, of immense importance. So everything, even if it seems small, has great meaning.

I brought home with me, in a particular way, what Mons. Pizzaballa said in the meeting he had with us, when he spoke of a style, a way of being. He talked a lot about this style of being there. I would say that in Jerusalem what we too are trying to do, and many others too, is to make dialogue a lifestyle, a way of life. This is what's needed, and on this basis everything is possible.

Hence it's really a unique experience because Jerusalem is unique.

Tamara: Emmaus, it's not the first time you went to the Holy Land.

Emmaus: No, it was the third time.

Tamara: And this time, was there something that impressed you most and why?

Emmaus: I will try to remember two occasions; I'm choosing two from among many: the visit to Gethsemane, in the church of Jesus' agony, and the Upper Room.

In Gethsemane, what made a great impression on me was thinking of Jesus there. He could see all the evil that was coming upon him and he was praying, praying to the Father. And quite nearby were the apostles because he had asked them to come with him to pray together.

But while he was praying to the Father, at a certain moment he felt he had to go to his friends, to the apostles, to see what they were doing, and they were sleeping. They were sleeping while he prayed, while he was preparing for the terrible time that was about to come. Then he woke them up, and the fact that he woke them up seemed to me like the greatest act of love he could have done. It was as if to say he was experiencing this for all people and he wanted to live it with people, like something that he wanted to do with his friends.

So spontaneously I asked Jesus: wake us up! When you see that we are falling asleep or that we are already asleep, wake us up. It then seemed as though he said, yes, yes, I will wake you up and make you encounter the needs of humanity. If you are careful, in every brother or sister who suffers, in every painful situation, I am coming to you, calling you and saying: "Give me a hand, stay with me, stay with me".

And this seemed to me the greatest act of love of a God who was giving his life for humanity.

Another extraordinary moment was in the Cenacle, because that is one of the places where the Gospel explicitly says that Mary was there and this seemed something beautiful to me, because it was the moment when the reality of the family was being revealed to the world, the family that Jesus came on earth to build. And a family needs a mother; Mary had to be there at that moment. Mary with the apostles who were fearful and frightened. The crowd was shouting outside and they had heard the crowd shouting against their Master, whom they had crucified and slandered. You can just imagine how frightening the crowd was.

But in that Upper Room, at a certain point they were overtaken by an overwhelming supernatural force, because the Holy Spirit entered and transformed them. So they turned to this crowd not to scold it, not to complain but to proclaim, to proclaim what? The wonders that God had done.

And hearing this proclamation, the Gospels say that 5,000 people joined them immediately. And these 5,000 people seemed to me to be the initial group beginning universal fraternity, as if at that moment the history of the Church - because the history of humanity began in Abraham's time, but the Church's history began, willed by Jesus for universal brotherhood and sisterhood, to bring about may they all be one.

So to say what I brought home from Jerusalem. A very new conviction that may they all be one will be achieved, and a passion that I too want to contribute to achieving it.

This is the strongest thing. Now we will listen to Chiara's thought. She will tell us the same thing, not to be afraid. In the times when it seems that our work is not achieving anything, that we can't manage to do anything, that the sufferings of humanity are too great, that what we do does not make sense. At those times, Jesus is there saying: "Let down your nets, let down your nets, do not be afraid, start again, you'll make it, you'll make it because I'm with you".

This is the greatest gift Jerusalem has given me and which I hope it will give to everyone. It's what Jerusalem and the Holy Land gave me, and I hope they will give to all those who are listening to us now.

Tamara: Thank you!

Emmaus: Thanks to you. (Applause)

11. CHIARA LUBICH: "IF YOU SAY SO, I WILL LOWER THE NETS"

Tamara: So all that remains is to hear Chiara's thought which comes from 1983 and taken from a Word of Life, a commentary that Chiara made very month on a phrase from the Gospel.

Chiara Lubich: When Jesus had finished teaching, he sat down in Simon Peter's boat and told him and his companions to lower their nets for a catch. Although Peter said they'd fished all night and caught nothing, he added, "But, if you say so, I will lower the nets." When they had done this, they caught such a great number of fish that the nets began to tear.

After a fruitless night, Peter, who was an expert at fishing, could have smiled and refused Jesus' invitation to lower the nets in broad daylight, a far worse time for fishing. Instead, going beyond his own reasoning, he trusted Jesus. This is a typical situation that all believers are called to face. ... Their faith is tested in a thousand different ways.

Following Jesus calls for decisiveness, commitment and perseverance whereas everything in the world we live in seems to invite us to take things easy, to be mediocre, and to take no notice. The task seems too great; it can't be achieved; it's doomed to failure from the start.

What we need is the strength to go ahead and resist the world around us, the social context, our friends and the media. It is a hard struggle ...

But, if we take on and welcome this struggle, we will experience that Jesus's extraordinary words are true and what he promised does happen. ... God fills those who follow him with an abundance of gifts; he gives the hundredfold in this life as well as eternal life. It is the miraculous catch of fish being repeated.

If you say so, I will lower the nets."

How can we put this word of life into practice?

We too can make the choice that Peter made — "If you say so . . ." We can have faith in Jesus' words and not have doubts about what he is asking of us. Quite the opposite, our whole life, our behaviour and our actions can be based on his word.

Our life will then be built up on solid and secure foundations. We will be astonished to see that in those very situations where every human resource fails, he intervenes, and even where it would be humanly impossible, life is born.

12. CONCLUSION

Tamara: So we too will lower the nets trustingly, without fear or doubts.

Before saying goodbye we have a surprise because during the call, some Gen who are meeting in Serbia have sent us a greeting. There are 70 of them, young people from all over Eastern Europe. Let's hear their message.

Gen: Hello to everyone from Serbia. We have met for a Gen congress in Serbia, from all over the Violet zone and we want to greet you all.

(The Gen say hello in different languages – applause)

Tamara: So now we will say good bye too. (Applause) We will leave one another until the next conference call which is on Saturday 27th April 2019 at 12 noon Italian time. See you then! (Applause).