

Rocca di Papa, 28th September 2019

CH CONFERENCE CALL (*Video 2485M – time: 58'*)

“THE PACT OF MUTUAL LOVE”

Presenters: Marco d'Ercole, Alessandro Biallo and Miso Kuleif

1. Opening and greetings

2. Live connection with Brazil - Manaus

3. Australia: "Hombre Mundo" Camp among the aborigines

The Youth for Unity in Oceania went to Lake Mungo to learn about the life and the culture of the aborigines. A unique experience that opened heart and arms.

4. Castel Gandolfo: The first Focolare youth assembly

There were 195 of them from 67 countries in the world aged 17 to 35 years old. They represent all the young people of the Focolare Movement and met to get to know each other, to ask questions, and plan for a more united world. Together.

5. GERMANY: Vlog from the 10th World Assembly of Religions for Peace

The video blog of Ana Clara Giovani, Brazilian journalist, who attended the event.

6. INDIA: A visit to the Focolare community in Bangalore

Dipping into the life of the Focolare community in Bangalore: from the story of Angela and Louis, to the "pizza evenings" organized by the Gen in focolare, to raise funds for various projects

7. TONADICO in the Dolomites: "To aim high" - faces and voices from the European Mariapolis -

Young people and adults, participants from East and West have made an important experience of openness, knowledge of different cultures and dialogue in Europe

8. Dialogue with Jesús Morán

9. CAMEROON: life goes on in Fontem

Aracelis and Charles are the co-ordinators of the Focolare community of the first little town in Africa. They take stock of the situation and tell how life is today

10. Chiara Lubich: A solemn "pact"

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1. OPENING AND GREETINGS

ALESSANDRO: Here we are! We're live!

MISO: Hello everyone!

MARCO: On the other side of this door is the new meeting hall, I think everyone's in there by now...

ALESSANDRO: So, shall we go in too?

MARCO: Sure.

MISO: No, no, no I can't cope... I'm going home!

MARCO: Miso, oh, come on! You too have the microphone. Let's go!

(They enter the hall – applause)

ALESSANDRO: Hello everyone and welcome!

MARCO: Welcome to the new auditorium at the Centre of the Focolare Movement.

MISO: We're connected live from Rocca di Papa and we're very excited at having the first Link-up from this new Hall. (Applause)

ALESSANDRO: Let's start by greeting everyone here, there are so many of us. Let's begin with the young people; there are the Gen, other youth members of the focolare and many friends. Show yourselves! (Applause) Many have come from towns near here; thank you for coming! (Applause)

MISO: There's also the General Council, together with the zone delegates from all over the world. They have just concluded their annual meeting. (Applause)

Special greetings to a group from the New Horizons community. We know that you have had an extraordinary experience a few days ago, when Pope Francis visited your place. (Applause)

MARCO: And of course, a greeting to all of you who are watching us from all over the world. I'm Marco, I'm 20 years old. I live here in Rocca di Papa and I study statistics. I like to understand facts and study social phenomena

ALESSANDRO: I come from nearby too, my name is Alessandro. I'm 20 years old and study biology.

MISO: I'm Miso, I'm 22 years old. I was born in Jordan but for many years I've lived here in Italy, in Ascoli Piceno. I study education, focusing on social malaise.

MARCO: We saw some images at the start. This hall has a lot of history behind it and is where many important things happened, as you, Emmaus, told us at the inauguration. It's new and old at the same time because despite the rebuilding that has been done, the moment we come in, we feel at home. So we want to thank all those who worked on the design and construction of this hall. They are here with us together with their families. Thank you. (Applause)

MISO: We'd like to inform you that you can send your impressions, suggestions, and photos thru mail, Facebook or WhatsApp 3204197109.

ALESSANDRO: But before we begin, since we are in a family, we would like to give some special greetings. Here in the front row, we have Danilo Zanzucchi who has just turned 99 years old, so officially he's beginning his hundredth year! (Applause)

2. LIVE CONNECTION WITH BRAZIL - MANAUS

MISO: It's likely that many of us took part in yesterday's demonstrations in many cities around the world for the *Climate Strike*.

On October 6th, the Catholic Church's Synod on Amazonia begins. We all know of the terrible fires that have devastated the Amazon rainforest in recent months and its serious consequences for the people. We are now connected live with Father Carlos.

MARCO: Father Carlos, are you there?

P. CARLOS CARIDADE: I'm here in Parintins, greetings from Parintins and from the people of Parintins.

MARCO: Hello, Fr Carlos. Greetings from Rocca di Papa.

P. CARLOS: Thank you.

MARCO: We know that right now you are at the Alvorada radio station in the south of Amazonia, a mission centre in the Diocese of Parintins. You are in charge of this radio and a local TV station through which you reach all the cities in this vast territory.

P. CARLOS: Yes, the distances are really immense in this region, which is considered the Lower Amazon. We can say that there are several Amazon areas within Amazonia. Communications here are very difficult. That's why the radio becomes the voice of these communities who have suffered so many environmental crimes over many years.

There haven't been any fires in this area, but we suffered the consequences of the wind-blown smoke which cause serious problems to people's health and to the economy.

Yes, because the forest isn't dying only because of the fires, but there is also the very serious problem of illegal deforestation which is on the rise. There are groups that trade wood illegally. Who is affected by all this? First of all the local population. In all this area, there are many ethnic groups; there are people who live along the rivers. In our Diocese, there are about 400 small communities. Then there are also the descendants of African people and the indigenous peoples...

The main concern is that these people live on what they cultivate from the land, by hunting and by fishing in the river. But deforestation undermines their survival also from the cultural and spiritual aspect, because they are forced to migrate to the big cities and they run the risk of losing their identity.

MARCO: As Focolare Movement, do you do many concrete actions in these areas?

P. CARLOS: Yes, The Focolare Movement has been here in our Diocese for 50 years.

During the United World Week in 2016, young people from all over the world, together with the local community and parish groups, took part in a clean-up activity of a lagoon in the centre of the city of Parintins, which had been polluted by a large amount of waste.

The residents wanted to continue this work, with cleaning up sessions, formation and creating public awareness. This activity is continuing even today.

MARCO: Thank you Father Carlos and to all of you.

P. CARLOS: Thank you. Bye.

ALL: Bye.

MARCO: Bye. (Applause) What you say helps us become more and more aware that the problem of Amazonia isn't only about times of great emergency, but we want to support you always.

3. AUSTRALIA: THE "HOMBRE MUNDO" CAMP AMONG THE ABORIGINES

MARCO: Miso? Miso, what are you doing there near that map?

MISO: Well, now we're going to... Australia!

ALESSANDRO: Yes, I'm here with Yob and Noreen, the delegates from Oceania. Noreen, what time is it now in Melbourne?

NOREEN: Oh, it's 4 in the morning.

ALESSANDRO: Four in the morning! (Laughter) Yob, we know that the Mariapolis is happening at the moment. Can you tell us something?

YOB: There are two Mariapolises at the moment, in the eastern part of Australia in Melbourne and in the west, in Perth. Yesterday, the Mariapolis went to an Anglican parish, where the priest is one of the aborigines. He shared with them the deep roots of the spirituality of the aborigines.

ALESSANDRO: Thank you.

The Teens for Unity from Oceania sent us this short video about the *Hombre Mundo* camp this summer. They went to find out about the life and culture of the aboriginal people.

Caption: Lake Mungo is a dry lake in south eastern Australia.

Caption: It is a World Heritage site where important archaeological findings have been made

Caption: including the oldest human remains ever discovered in Australia.

Caption: The aboriginal people are one of the oldest in the world going back 60,000 years.

Caption: 50 youth from all over Oceania recently travelled to Lake Mungo

Caption: to learn more about the aboriginal people and their rich cultures.

Girl: *This camp for me was an opportunity to learn more about the aboriginal people of Australia; to learn more about their culture and their way of life. But this camp was also a way for me to make new friends and learn about who they are, where they come from.*

Caption: *There are about 750,000 indigenous Australians in Australia from nearly 500 cultural groups*

Caption: *each with its own language and traditions.*

Boy: *I gained a better understanding of the aboriginal culture and land. I even got some tips for playing the didgeridoo.*

Caption: *"I felt like I finally made an effort to understand the culture and histories of the country I was born and raised in" Peter (16 years old)*

(Applause)

4. CASTEL GANDOLFO: THE FIRST FOCOLARE YOUTH ASSEMBLY

MISO: Two weeks ago we were here in this room with many young people representing many countries around the world for the first assembly of the youth of the focolare. I was in the commission organising it and we worked together for a year. We had asked for this assembly so as to get to know each other, take stock of the situation and make proposals for the future.

Music

Speaker: There were 195 participants, aged 17-35, from 67 countries. They were the delegates at the first Youth Assembly of the Focolare Movement.

Music

Esther - Cuba (in Spanish): At this assembly we are deciding the way forward for the Gen movement and the other [youth] realities over the next six years. So I think it's a key moment in which we're bringing the future into the present.

Debora - Italy (in Italian): We have started some very practical work on the most important themes of this assembly.

Fernando, OMI missionary - Uruguay: There are four major themes; the first concerns our identity; the second our, "going out [towards others]"; the third is about formation and accompaniment and the fourth is role and leadership.

Pababelo Sethiba - South Africa (in English) :I expect that we'll focus on the problems; being able to say what our country is going through and the problems we have, asking how other countries or other zones work on those particular problems ... if we do have the same problems.

Speaker: The key figures at this assembly are those who belong to the various youth sectors of the Focolare: there are the Gen, the young religious, the seminarians, the young members of the Parish and Diocesan movements and the Youth for a United World.

Jean Philippe - Ivory Coast (in French): It's impressive to see how each of can say what we expect, what we want to achieve through the different formation we receive and the accompaniment we would like to have. We spoke without barriers and everyone could express themselves.

Reny - Venezuela (in Spanish): I think we need to deepen the social, moral and doctrinal aspects of our formation and also the psychological ones so that our young people can respond to the challenges they face in their countries, in the different age groups.

Amanda - Brazil (in Portuguese): We have set out on this journey of "going outwards": from an individual identity to a collective identity, as young people.

Speaker: The young people have come to this Assembly after much preparation, which began in their groups, but was not confined to them. In recent months Gen congresses have been held in Oceania, the Middle East and Brazil; there were youth camps and schools run by Youth for a United World on the themes of peace, justice and lawfulness, following the "yellow" Pathway. There was a school for Ambassadors of the United World at Army, in France, and the school camps run by the parish and diocesan movement.

It's hard to summarize all the topics addressed in these few days, but in such an intercultural environment, difficulties were not lacking...

Clara - Uruguay (Spanish): The most difficult thing was expressing the reality that each one brought with them because there are many problems in each zone and sometimes it was difficult to understand one another.

Amanda - Brazil (in Portuguese): There have been conflicts; because it's not that there was unanimity on the document and that we were all very happy! No.

Laxman - India (in English): For myself, I used the method of continuous conversation. Because a lot of things for me, I don't understand because it's very Catholic. So for me, still to accept the other, and for that person to accept my opinion as an outsider...

Esther - Cuba (in Spanish): Each of us, each of our youth realities, must manage to put ourselves in the shoes of the others, of someone who is not a Christian, who belongs to another religion. We need to know that there is room for everyone in the movement. Our charism is unity. There is space for everyone.

Jojo - Thailand (in English): Something is different, but I like that because it's like the colour of life.

The moderator: Let's vote.

A young man: The final document of the 2019 Youth Assembly is approved.

Nicholas - Italy (in Italian): What I'm taking away from this assembly are different things, some are still unclear, and they need to be worked through. On is this love for a united world, so wanting to get involved, not waiting for someone else to do it; we can be leaders. This is our time.

Laxman - India (in English): I feel like my only goal when I get back is like okay, let's get together and start working to re-ignite the fire amongst the youth.

MARCO: As you've seen the Assembly was a very important starting point, the start of a journey.

Now we want to link up with the young people in Argentina who have just concluded the 26th "Fiesta de los Jovenes", Youth Festival. There were over 1,000 of them from all over Argentina **and Latin America**. The highlight of the meeting was with Chiara Luce Badano's mother, Maria Teresa and Chiara Luce's best friend, Chicca.

Chiara Luce was a Gen and she was declared "Blessed" in 2010. Some of our friends who were there said that through their sharing, they felt Chiara Luce very close to them, as a model for their lives and a friend to help them overcome difficulties.

5. GERMANY: VLOG FROM THE 10th WORLD ASSEMBLY OF RELIGIONS FOR PEACE

ALESSANDRO: Last August, in Germany, there was a World Assembly of Religions for Peace. Ana Clara Giovani, a Brazilian Gen and a journalist, told us about it with her video blog.

Ana Clara Giovani (in Portuguese): Hi, I'm Ana from Brazil, I live in San Paulo and I study journalism. I was invited to a congress on interreligious dialogue. It was organized by an NGO called Religions for Peace. Before telling you about this experience, I'd like to present you the people I made friends with there.

Various young people (in English)

I'm Jesslyn.

My name is Philbert Aganyo.

I'm Jacqueline Mallari.

My name is Merelyn Chitharai.

My name is Abdiel.

I'm Htet. My name is Agatha Sagne.

And I'm a Buddhist.

I'm Seventh-day Adventist Christian.

I'm catholic.

I'm Hindu.

I'm protestant.

I'm Buddhist.

I'm catholic.

Ana Clara Giovani (in Portuguese): Yesterday, I arrived here in Bonn, Germany, a city of over 300,000 inhabitants. Here are some state broadcasting companies, including Deutsche Welle, a German radio station. And I've come to this city precisely for a week with many lessons and workshops on communication and social networks. We created an Instagram and Twitter account and a Facebook group to share everything that is happening in the Assembly and is of interest to us.

I've already arrived in Lindau to be part of the Assembly. This is the building that will house the meeting.

Caption: Religions for Peace brings together world's religious communities to cooperate effectively for peace, by taking concrete joint action. The World Assembly is an opportunity to share local experiences and propose actions for the next 5 years. For further information, access: rfp.org.

Ana Clara Giovani (in Portuguese): There was the pre-assembly of young people on the first day, a time when young people from all over the world could meet to share what they are doing and think about action for the future. There were even young people who had no religious beliefs.

Benedicte Charrier - Francia (in English): "it's so important to us that interfaith not only means people of different faith as in religious faith but also in other kinds of faith in terms of just convictions. I have faith in what we can do together, I don't have faith in God but I have faith in a lot of things that we have in common."

Ana Clara Giovani (in Portuguese): One day we went on a "march" to inaugurate a monument for peace. It is the Ring for Peace, a work of art made of 36 types of wood, which represents the alliance of peoples building peace. I think that interreligious dialogue is this everlasting journey in which we gradually build relationships, in diversity, but in which these people are truly willing to dialogue.

While the assembly was taking place, we continued to work and produce content for social networks. It was very nice because we were very free to choose the topics we wanted to talk about.

One of the topics that really interested us was the work that some Jewish, Christian and Muslim women in the Middle East and North Africa are doing to ensure education and financial independence for women.

Ms. Layla Alkahafaji – Iraq (in English): "By getting MENA (Middle East and North Africa) Women in Jordan as well, when we get together, we exchange the experience; we figure out that different faith doesn't mean we have to have conflict. Different faith we look on things from different angles. So no matter what, hardship should get women together to look from different angle, bring their experience to enrich their thinking and to enrich their tools, to deal with issues in their country."

Ana Clara Giovani (in Portuguese): Today we will be interviewing a very important indigenous leader, Sonia Guajajara. She works in partnership with Religions for Peace and the United Nations in a project called Interfaith Rainforests Initiative, which promotes the protection of rainforests and of indigenous peoples.

Sonia Guajajara - Brazil (in Portuguese): All the movements in the world right now are concerned about protecting the environment, protecting Mother Earth, and it is very

important that all faiths in the world unite to support this struggle and practice solidarity.

Ana Clara Giovani (in Portuguese): At the end of the Assembly, a declaration was made with some proposals for the coming years.

Ana Clara Giovani (in Portuguese): I was a bit disappointed not seeing many people from the Focolare Movement there, because I think that Chiara has given us a great gift which is interreligious dialogue. So if you, dear young person, are interested in interreligious dialogue and want to work for it, send me a message on Instagram, call me on WhatsApp, send a smoke signal, anything! Come and talk to me and we will try to connect a worldwide network of young people who want to work for interreligious dialogue.

A young person (in English): "See you next time. ... [It's a video! Oh, it's a video all along?]"

ALESSANDRO: Thanks Ana Clara.

6. INDIA: A VISIT TO THE FOCOLARE COMMUNITY IN BANGALORE

ALESSANDRO: Now we are going to India, to Bangalore, right into a multi faith environment. We'll get to know something about the focolare community in that city.

Speaker: We are in the city of Bangalore, in the south of India. It has large parks, stands almost a thousand meters above sea level and is the capital of information technology, India's Silicon Valley, but it's also a multi-ethnic and multi-religious metropolis. Its cosmopolitan character is seen in more than a thousand Hindu temples, 400 mosques and 100 Christian churches. Nearby is Russel Market, the big market with all kinds of goods, and there you are in a completely Muslim environment, surrounded by many mosques. Not far away, across a small square, suddenly you see the big Catholic basilica of Shivajii Nagar, dedicated to Mary. A little further on there are many Hindu temples like Om Shakthi Temple, where many people go every day of the week.

There is a peaceful coexistence among those belonging to different religions, but sometimes it is overlain by distrust or tension due to political exploitation.

The focolare community has been here in Bangalore for several years and is at the forefront in fostering a culture of dialogue and education in dialogue with other religions, like today's event at Holy Ghost Church, in a mostly Catholic neighbourhood that was once on the outskirts of the city. They are talking about the Catholic Church and dialogue, especially Pope Francis, but also in the light of the Second Vatican Council.

Here we also meet Angela and Luis Colaco. Like many other people in this part of the world, they spent many years working in countries in the Persian Gulf. After their retirement, they returned to live in India and encountered many difficulties.

Angela Colaco: We came back here, I at least did not think it would be so difficult to settle in our own home. But being away for so many years it was really very difficult. [...] there wasn't much quality in the life here.

And because of that I kept on constantly grumbling. Why did we come back? Why did we come back?

Then I made up my mind, I said now it's time to decide. I said now the Lord has brought me here, I must not look back and give my services to the community college. This is the 15th year. And I think that was the best thing I did, or, we did together as a family, as a couple.

Luis Colaco: When I came to India for me, I told myself one simple thing and that was that God has given me a lot of things in life. Now in my retirement age, now I must give back to the society something in return for the many blessings God gave to me in my life.

Angela Colaco: The community college has been started by the Parish for the underprivileged, the children from the slums, who fortunately have been able to study and come up to the tenth standard. But maybe unable to pass or get sufficient marks to enter into regular college or they had no finances to pay.

So the four subjects offered were life skills first. To make them realize that "I am no different from anybody else even though I may be born in a poor family. Or my background, my parents don't have sufficient money or whatever it is"; you are precious and you are the same like everybody.

English was very important because they came from the vernacular schools. So how to speak English, to communicate in English, write English. And then computer skills, basic computers because they have never even touched a computer.

And I prepare them for jobs and then as a job comes in we send them.

So all of them practically every one of them has a problem and all they're looking for is love. They're just looking for someone to understand them. Someone to listen to them, and someone to love them. And what do you get back from them is really real love.

Louis Colaco: We work like a team with great unity. And I found that working in that team we were actually reinforced by the spirit we have in Focolare, of unity, love, understanding, respect.

And I'm sure you want to know my age. Well, my age is ..., I cannot hide my age, really, but you know sometimes a get charmed by when I go to the bank and the young ladies ask me: "So how old are you?" I said: "You have the records, please check them!" She says: "No no no. Please tell us what your age is".

Sir, I passed 84 years! But I can tell you one secret: I teach young people. And that gives me a life

Speaker: If you think it is impossible to eat a good pizza in Bangalore, well, you are wrong! Just go to the focolare, sometimes the living room turns into a real pizzeria: orders are made through the app and you start work. The initiative began a few years ago to gather funds to support young people in Gaza when it was bombed and has been a success... it works!

Aaron Pacheco: The reason I come to make pizza a lot of the times is not because of I feel good, "Oh I did this!" "I am a very very nice person because, you know, I bring ahead this cause."

But I feel like because as a person this is what I can contribute back to society. I may not have my financial, I may not be able to give like sacks of money. I might not, you know, know the best way to contribute, but in this way I take back an experience of building it in unity where mistakes are allowed - as long as they are little mistakes - but also to be made in the spirit of understanding, of love, of unity. And I think that's what makes me come back here every time we make pizza.

MISO: Greetings to Angela and Louis, to the young people and the whole community! It's true that everybody has something to give.

7. TONADICO IN THE DOLOMITES: "TO AIM HIGH" – FACES AND VOICES FROM THE EUROPEAN MARIAPOLIS

MARCO: Even Europe is a multicultural context. The Old Continent has long been questioning its future. There is the possibility of new divisions or that walls would return which we thought were out-dated. In any case there is a need to talk, to get to know each other more. This is why the idea of having the first European Mariapolis emerged. The Mariapolises are the summer meetings of the focolares that began a new style of living together among different generations, peoples and cultures.

Conleth Burns, Armoy - Northern Ireland (English)

We can see that there are different approaches to migration, to the refugee crisis, to climate change, to Brexit, all of those things; we can see them as ends in themselves; we can see that there will always be a division. The challenge for us is how we approach those contradictions.

Paola Mosca, Trieste - Italy (in Italian)

At the moment, there are forces at work in Europe encouraging integration among peoples but there are others which emphasize autonomy and tend to divide. So we felt the need to create an opportunity for dialogue among peoples and be able to share some ideas, share experiences and above all listen to one another. That was how the idea of the European Mariapolis came about.

More than 2,600 people took part, from 38 European countries and even beyond, because we had participants from Jordan, Brazil and Argentina.

Caption title: A common destiny

Muireann Ní Éideáin, Dublin - Ireland (in English)

We have had certain experiences like climbing mountains together, as Ireland, England, Italy, Serbia, Poland, loads of countries. And as we were climbing this mountain together, we're all helping each other, giving water, giving advice, maybe slowing down for the other and bring them on. And I think small things like these represent that Europe can be a place where people can work together, despite their various political views, despite their culture.

Kacper Pietraszewski, Warsaw - Poland (in Polish)

I think it is very important to try to leave behind the stereotypes we live with and that are constantly strengthened because the media tell us what they want and make a big fuss. It's important to reach the truth together and support each other in this dialogue.

Joe Driver, Dundee - Scotland (in English)

Brexit for me and for lots of people from the United Kingdom is a very divisive topic. Actually for me it is a very sad reality. I think this is really false and unacceptable because as we can see from our football game here, even if we have our differences, Britain wanting to defeat Italy, but we can all be friends. We can all laugh, we can all have fun.

Snezana Pavlovic, Belgrade - Serbia (in Serbian)

I am Orthodox and I came with my family.

My first impression of the Mariapolis is that it's a great event; Europe is big and very diverse. There are so many language barriers and cultural barriers, but despite everything we must practice what Chiara Lubich told us, unity in diversity. A spiritually united Europe, but with all diversities, because diversity is beauty and enrichment.

Dimitar Plachkov, Sofia - Bulgaria (in Bulgarian)

For me one of the most significant opportunities in the European Mariapolis is to get to know

each other. I come from Bulgaria, a country that suffered very much because of the wall. The European Union is not just an economic community; it exists because we want to be united and we need each other.

Barbara Passalacqua, Trent - Italy (in Italian)

Just now we are in Pieve di Fiera in Primiero, and a group of young people speaking English and Irish and some Italians are visiting the Pieve. This church played a special role in the Mariapolises, particularly in the last one that was held here at Fiera di Primiero in 1959. More than 12,000 people, of 27 nationalities, came and at the end of the Mariapolis, on 22nd August, the feast of the Queenship of Mary, 9 representatives of the languages present in the Mariapolis consecrated their peoples to Mary.

Caption: The consecration to Mary, in various languages

Miquel Aguado, Movement for Policies and Politics for Unity, Madrid - Spain (in Spanish)

One of the important occasions in the Mariapolis is remembering and renewing the commitment that Chiara and Igino Giordani made together with the politicians who were at the Mariapolis in 1959: the shift from love among individual people to collective love; by which I mean loving other people's countries, other people's cultures and languages as our own.

Alberto Lo Presti, Igino Giordani Centre, Rome - Italy (in Italian)

It is very relevant today to return to a consecration of peoples to Mary. Because we feel that in the contemporary world there are rumblings of disunity, there are misunderstandings and levels of intolerance we thought we had already overcome.

We are in a world that is marked by global processes, so giving a soul to these movements that tend towards unity means first rebuilding our own historical destiny, recognizing that we are all brothers and sisters, so as to transform our history and direct it towards this shared destiny. (Music)

(Applause)

8. DIALOGUE WITH JESÚS MORÁN

ALESSANDRO: Here with us is Jesús Moran, the co-president of the Focolare (applause). Jesús, as we have seen, both the European Mariapolis and the Youth Assembly were two very important events and you took part in both of them. What can you tell us about them?

Jesùs: Well, you guys were there, too.

Let me start with the Youth Assembly, which has been formidable. I believe they taught a lesson to us adults because you were really very serious; the young people were very involved in the work - you saw it in the pictures. I was very impressed by how the young people were able to bear with the differences and really dialogue, in order to produce a document that was accepted by all.

As has been said, more than the document being the outcome of the Assembly, the best fruit of all was yourselves. It was particularly clear towards the end, when we came and were enthused by this immense joy. What we said once with Emmaus is true, that you are not our future; you are your own future. And in this sense you are the future of the whole Movement.

So I thank you very much.

As far as the European Mariapolis is concerned, I went there twice: the first week and then the last week with Emmaus, and I must say that I was very impressed. I never attended any of the first Mariapolises, but I felt I was living those times. I said to myself, “this is really a Mariapolis as Chiara saw how they should be, that is, a new society with a diversity of beliefs and of cultures, and with the human relationships that were established. It was really like touching Paradise. Then, apart from anything else, the natural environment up there is truly heavenly.

I believe that the European Mariapolis was both a cultural and human event, of the kind that don't make a noise, (although I believe it should have made more noise in the media) - but that do make history. I mean that they make history over time because they are really prophetic. A huge amount of prejudice was cast aside during those weeks and it's Europe's bread and butter. The amount of prejudices [in Europe] is incredible. So, as some of the people who spoke said, it really was an experience of being a family and so if you want to look to the future of Europe, you must go there.

I hope that there will be another one as soon as possible. (Laughter)

ALESSANDRO: Thank you Jesús.

9. CAMEROON: LIFE GOES ON IN FONTEM

MISO: In recent months many of you have asked for news of the situation in Fontem, the little town of the Focolare in Cameroon, which is in a conflict zone. Unfortunately, the situation has not yet been resolved. We spoke to Aracelis and Charles, who came here to Italy, to tell us something about the situation in Fontem now.

Aracelis Nkeze: We got to the airport; we entered the bus that had to bring us to the Mariapolis Centre. I said: “I am Aracelis from Fontem”. They said: “No, Fontem is closed”. I said: “No, Fontem is not closed. So I want to tell all of you that Fontem is not closed!”

Speaker: This is the message that comes over strongly from Aracelis Nkeze and Charles Tasong, co-ordinators of the Focolare community in Fontem in Cameroon.

They came to Castel Gandolfo to take part in an international meeting of those responsible for local communities, after a journey that seemed like a scene from a film because of the acute socio-political crisis in Cameroon.

Aracelis Nkeze: We had to trek – for those who know Fontem – from Nveh to Njentse. In some places the road is completely cut. You have to go through the bush and then come down... and then we took a motorbike and continued to Dschang. So the journey was difficult, but possible.

Speaker: Fontem is the first little town of the Focolare Movement in Africa and it occupies a privileged place in the history and in the heart of the Focolare.

The arrival of the first focolarini doctors in 1966 marked the beginning of a unique relationship between Chiara Lubich and the Bangwa people and since then the fruits can be seen by all: among them is the school, Our Lady Seat of Wisdom College and the Mary Health of Africa hospital.

2016 marked the beginning of a socio-political crisis in the English-speaking regions of

Cameroon. Fontem is located right in one of these regions.

Since then we have been anxiously following the situation as it evolves. There were moments of violent armed conflict between the state army and the English-speaking separatists. In these regions all services are suspended.

Aracelis Nkeze: Ever since these struggles started, many people ran from their homes and they came to the Mariapolis Centre for shelter.

Charles Tasonq: The Mariapolis Centre for us is like a meeting point where all our activities are taking place. On Sundays sometimes we are close to 200, 300. When we have big events we are close to 500 of us. Also in the hospital women come for vaccines for their children. Pregnant women come to stay at the Mariapolis Centre because the Mariapolis Centre is closer to the hospital. So they stay there to give birth to their babies.

Speaker: Classes in the College are suspended. But the hospital, thanks to the efforts - and let's say - the courage of some nurses and auxiliary staff, is still open and they try to help anyone who comes through its doors.

Aracelis Nkeze: There is no doctor in the hospital but the few nurses that are there are doing a great job. There have been no issues, no issues to say: "Oh, this person died because there was no doctor." So you see there is only the work of God. It all speaks of a miracle.

Speaker: Charles and Aracelis support the Focolare community in Fontem with personal sacrifices and much love. Charles is married and has 6 children. His family has moved further north to Bamenda, a safer city that means the children can continue their studies. As a family they decided that it is good for him to stay in Fontem to stay close to the population that could not leave the valley.

Charles Tasonq: This was really impossible for me to hear this kind of statement that Fontem is closed. Chiara came to Fontem in 2000 and made a pact of mutual love with the Bangwa people and with everybody. And now? How can somebody think that Fontem is closed? It's impossible. The life of Chiara should be in our blood. So if you want Fontem to be completely closed, you go to each one and take out the blood. But I think it is impossible because we are living the life of mutual love, which will go ahead.

Speaker: Aracelis gives time and love to the many people she meets. Seeing her contagious joy, it's not immediately obvious that she, like Charles, has experienced occasions when her own life was in danger. We asked where she gets the strength to keep going.

Aracelis: I find strength in God. In God. I have given my life for the people. And we have gone back to the early times of the Ideal and it is giving us a lot of courage, it is making us to really see that now we are on the right track. If we look at what happened in the days of Chiara during the Second World War and what is happening now, we say our war it's nothing compared to what Chiara was able to embrace and none of them died. So we are just putting our lives in the hands of God and trust in God for everything.

Speaker: Being with Charles and Aracelis for a short time was enough to understand that thinking Fontem is closed is very far off the mark. Their certainty of peace does not stop at Fontem and Cameroon.

Charles: The first thing that come to my heart truly, deep in my heart would be that we all should live the pact of mutual love that Mamma Chiara gave to us. It was for everybody, everybody. I believe very strongly that if we all live that pact, all the problems in the world will be solved. We will solve it. It will not be a miracle, it will come. So I would tell everyone to live this pact of mutual love, everywhere, and we will change the world, and we will go ahead. That would be my wish if everyone can put this pact of mutual love into practice, yes.

ALESSANDRO: Thank you Charles. Thank you Aracelis.

10. CHIARA LUBICH: A SOLEMN "PACT"

ALESSANDRO: Now we are going to stay in Fontem because we want to re-live together one very important occasion. It was May 2000 when Chiara was there with all the people of the area and they made this pact of mutual love in a very solemn way. Let's watch the video.

Chiara: And now I feel I cannot leave without making a solemn pact with you, a strong and binding pact of mutual love. It's like a kind of oath in which we commit ourselves to be always fully at peace among ourselves and to recompose it each time it has been broken. I want to make this pact in order to guarantee also in the future Fontem's vocation, to be "a city on the mountaintop", so that it can be seen by all (applause), admired by all, imitated by all. And now attention, as an external sign of this pact, let us shake hand together. Thanks to all those who made it. Jesus today is in our midst and he is happy. (Applause) And God, like many years ago, will envelop us all like a sun, with his presence. Thank you to all of you! (Applause)

11. GREETING BY MARIA VOCE (EMMAUS)

Miso: Emmaus, you are the president of the Focolare. Please come up... (Laughter). This pact is really powerful. I feel it is not something about the past but something we can renew today too.

Emmaus: You're absolutely right; we really need to renew it today, too. Do you know why? Because this Pact makes unity possible and unity actually brings the presence of Jesus in our midst, his presence in our midst, as Chiara said. Then Jesus is the key player in our Movement, not we who are working at it. He is the key player in the Movement. We saw this during the two-week meeting we had with the delegates of the Movement. We saw how big the Movement has become, how many fruits there were, and these fruits are thanks to all of you who are all over the world and who are committed to living this Ideal. So we thank you very much.

But we have also seen how complex the Movement is, given the infinite variety that it contains: different cultures, different generations as we have seen, various Churches, different levels of maturity of the different zones that are not all at the same point. Who could think of managing such a thing? We would be crazy to think we could do it alone, we can't do it, it's not our job. Fortunately we don't have to do it because Jesus in our midst has to do it.

Jesus in our midst is the leader of our Movement and we have dedicated this year that is starting now precisely to him, because we feel that if he is in our midst he will give us the light we need to understand moment by moment, what is the right thing to do, what is the right thing to say, how to act in those particular circumstances. And with him we can keep going.

And if he is in our midst - and we are sure that he is in our midst today - but for him to really

be amongst us, let's make this pact. I make it with you, Alessandro, with you Miso, with you Marco; I make the pact with all of you. I make it also with all those who are seeing me from around the world. Truly, so that he can be among us. And he is in our midst, Chiara said so; and he is happy. So what more do we want? Let us give Him the joy of being happy in our midst for the whole year and beyond.

Bye, everyone!

Miso: Thank you so much! (Applause)

12. CONCLUSION

MARCO: So we have come to the end... We remind you that the next link up will be on 7th December and a great part of it will be broadcasted from Trent.

ALESSANDRO: Before we say goodbye, we wanted to show you this book. It's called "Conversations – in a telephone link up, edited by Michel Vandeleene". It is not exactly pocket size, but it does bring together 300 spiritual thoughts that Chiara Lubich had shared during the Conference calls between 1981 and 2004. (Applause)

MARCO: Now I'd like to say something extra. Today we thanked and greeted many people, but we wanted to thank all the people who in silence and with dedication work for the conference call, starting from those furthest away, the people who send us news and reports, and then those who work in directing, sound engineers, technicians, those who are translating, and of course the editorial staff that have supported and borne with us.

To all of you again a huge thanks you! (Applause)

MISO: And so we greet you. Goodbye to all!

MARCO: Bye! (Laughter and applause)