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Signs of love

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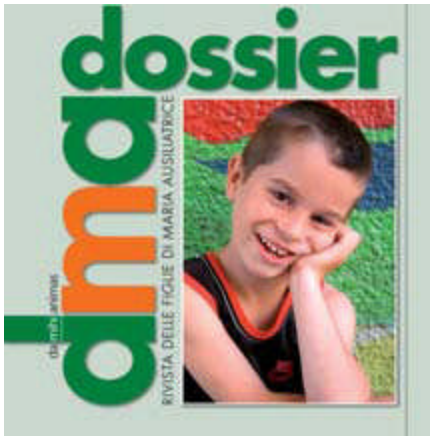
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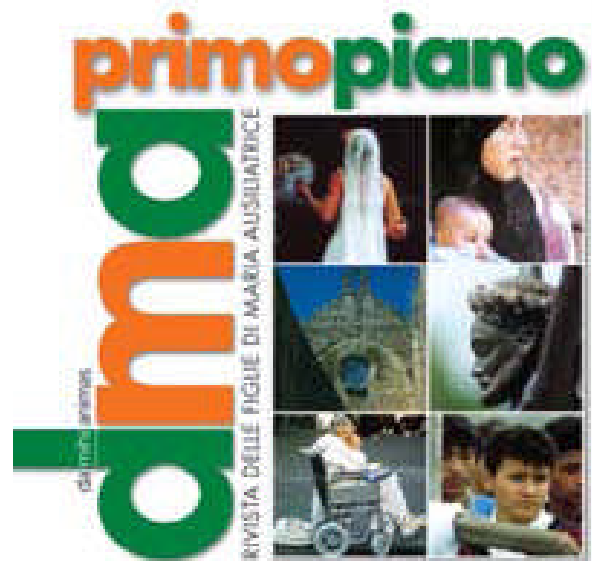
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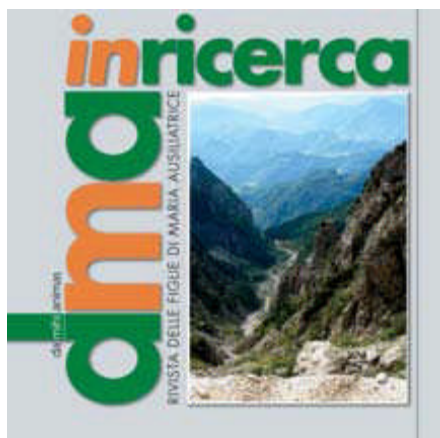
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Beyond the threshold of reciprocity

Giuseppina Teruggi

Adriana and Sandro, a young couple living near Florence, have chosen to establish their home in the parish house where there is no priest. They collaborate in the animation of the Christian community.

In Trento, Julia and Mark have given up personal careers and are at the disposition of the parish ministry. These are young lay people who live collaboration in terms of co-responsibility, convinced that being Church means carrying out gestures of convergence on journeys built together between consecrated and non-consecrated persons.

When visiting the Sisters in Cambodia, I asked them if they had to close their house so that they could be present at the planning meeting. "Certainly not," they replied, "there are the volunteers, and there are the lay people who carry out the activities."

Castelnuovo Nigra, close to Turin, has become a symbol of reciprocity between FMA and Past Pupils. It is a reality built together in the passing on to the laity for journeys of continuity beyond our frontiers. Similarly, since 2006, in the retreat house of Los Teques in Venezuela, the religious community has left and the management is now entrusted to the Past Pupils. At Villetta in Paraguay, laity and FMA together animate a familiar structure that welcomes children in situations of risk, in a family structure.

In schools and youth centers, in varied works in every part of the world, we live gteruggi@cgm.org

and work side by side with the laity in sharing spirituality and mission. And frequently we entrust to them places of action that in the past saw us as the sole protagonists. From the time of the Council on and in the light of recent guidelines from the Church and the Institute, we have entered into a unanimity that has asked of us the difficult passage from the extraneous to collaboration. And it now renders us available for a further journey: from collaboration to co-responsibility. In the original meaning of the word, collaborating signifies suffering together for a travail that must produce something new. Being co-responsible is something more. It means feeling called by the Spirit, though with different roles, to the same level, ready to accept His provocations. In the conviction that one cannot without others. It is a journey of reciprocity set in motion and open to even further steps. The theologian Ina Siviglia recognizes that the relationship between laity/religious is "*on the threshold*" of reciprocity. She emphasizes: "Perhaps we have not yet crossed it. I ask myself: "What could communion, dialogue, the idea of charity be like once we have crossed the threshold. It will deal with a free, creative experience in reciprocity. Perhaps we have yet to discover it in a good part of the newness of common life, this being together ...a mirror of Trinitarian life." However, in our communities real steps to go *beyond the threshold* are ever more numerous.

dossier

da mihi animas

STA DELLE FIGLIE DI MARIA AUSILIATRICE



Signs of love
for the young

Dossier

Laity and FMA

Signs of love for youth

This is a dossier written by multiple contributors, FMA and laity, to witness to the importance of working and living together, in a style of communion, to be signs and expressions of love for young people.

For full communion

Speaking of the rapport with the laity means speaking of a continual and undeniable experience of our life as consecrated women and as FMA. The relationship is a dimension of Christian life that the Salesian charism has developed as an educational relationship around the person of young people. Laity and religious work together with the same passion for the good of youth just as they did at Valdocco and at Mornese even before the ecclesiology of communion was spoken of. Our existence as Salesian educators cannot be conceived without the relationship of reciprocity with many lay people who-believers or non-believers in Jesus-knowingly adhere to the apostolic projects of the community and who live the service of life still in growth. This deals with a relationship that flows from the same source: love for one another.

For the laity as for us, love is life, joy, freedom, fire that purifies, taking a chance on a new world, being open to transcendence. Together we discover or deepen the experience of a manifested love that is a game and a task, work and song, struggle and relief, trust and reason, activity and rest, energy and loving kindness. Love is the life of God. It expands the heart in knowing that the Salesian charism shared between laity and FMA often succeeds in overcoming the frontiers of the same faith, to embrace believers of other non-Christian religions who, together with us, feel that they are signs of the love of God for youth

and who look to Don Bosco and Maria Domenica as teachers and guides.

True communion among past pupils, Salesians co-operators and FMA testifies in a particular way to the fact that the Salesian Charism is a shared treasure that belongs to each and every group and to the three groups together. Salesian spirituality is the unifying element, the “cement”, as Fr. Juan Edmundo Vecchi loved to say, that unites us and makes possible the encounter, the root of mutual relationships, the bond that connects and at the same time diversifies the different identities. Arriving at a mature relationship marked by real interaction in a spirit of communion and a recognized need for complementarity is a great challenge. This new scenario requires great clarity in one’s identity and a strong will to share deeply that flows from a process of continual formation both in the laity and the FMA. The Lay-FMA communion presupposes and is condition by a true animation in the Salesian style, in the mission of educating through evangelizing, i.e., to begin from true love. Communion is the force that nourishes the commitment to re-express, in both FMA and laity, the Preventive System, considered as a spirituality rooted in the all-foreseeing love of the Father, in Christ, lived with the young people in the educating community.

Maria de los Angeles Contreras
General Counselor of the Sector
for the Salesian Family.

In the life of relationships

The profoundly different way of living the same Salesian charism between laity and religious brings with it also the need to

share, or at least to know better, the difficulties that the other encounters in dialoguing and working with us. Frequently, the accent was placed on the diversity of conditions, both religious and lay, but there



should also be an effort to understand the different levels of “preparation” and “formation. When laity and religious work together, it is necessary to take into account this marked and objective diversity, that could also generate difficulty in understanding especially what is relative to the diversity of approaching problems and seeking solutions. We certainly share the same mission, the same charismatic identity and most probably the same sensitivity toward the problems of education and of the world of youth. We should not, however, hide the even profound differences in our

way of working that are generated by the diverse conditions or states and by a diverse journey. Barring rare exceptions, it is evident how differently the laity and religious approach the journey of the Salesian Family. The former could come from the most disparate previous experiences and therefore reach their vocation and *the Promise* after the formative journey that is objectively not very intense and not sufficiently nourished by a continual formative offering.

Then, with reference to the different **state**, from which naturally there derives also a different **grace**, there does not escape from anyone the profound difference between living one’s charism in community, with rules, times, bonds, freedom and living the same Salesian charism with other lay persons, and with the religious themselves, but rather as seculars, as Salesians inserted in the world, with a family, with work problems, frequently isolated and with all the bonds and conditioning that derive from such an existential condition. This helps to better understand the reason for the objective difficulties that could rise from working together. At times it will be the awareness of one’s own “formative” limitations, especially when we have to face questions that are more properly “religious”, at other times it will be the impossibility of overcoming the limits and bonds imposed by family commitments and work. The fact remains that inevitably we come to create in the shared work a “hierarchical” type of rapport. These relationships can be overcome or at least mitigated only if on the one side, on the part of the laity, there is the acquisition of a great awareness of their own charism and of their own capacity, and if, on the other, on the part of the Sisters, Priests and Brothers there is the availability to place one’s self in a condition of “service” in virtue of which there is the dimension of generating that is quantitatively greater than the work carried out and there is not added a qualitatively superior dimension to this work.

The SDB and FMA should assume an action of “accompaniment” either for

vocational or missionary growth, while in a certain sense manifesting and practicing that pedagogical-formative sensitivity that is proper to their identity. Naturally, in various environments and sectors that are not properly charismatic-religious but are, however, very important for organizing an adequate educational response to the needs of young people, the contribution, awareness, and experiences of the laity could and must be different, even on the qualitative level, and in such case, the roles could also be “inverted”.

Maria Trigila

World Delegate for Salesian Sisters Cooperators.

Learning to live Communion

A concrete witness is that relative to the work that has been carried out for the past six years within the World Executive Secretariat of the Salesian Cooperators Association. After having been co-opted by the Rector Major of the time, Fr. Vecchi, who sought to remain faithful to my theory, that I sought to practice when I was coordinator for the Roman Province, based on the idea that when one assumes the task of “government” in the association there is a need to identify self fully in the role but certainly and above all to live it in a spirit of service. I intend to say that the best way of serving the association and through it this Salesian Family, is by doing well the task you are asked to assume at this time. Whoever is called to service must do it with an adequate spirit, but especially by choosing it as a principal mission, with the courage to leave aside other commitments. Therefore, notwithstanding work and family commitments, I have sought to live my Salesianity by dedicating myself in the best way to the task of coordination on a worldwide level in a practically exclusive manner.

This has brought with it also the need to live in strong communion with the other lay and religious of the World Executive Secretariat, thus succeeding in living many

and intense times of community sharing, almost experiencing for brief periods the common life specific to religious. Certainly, this has been a true privilege because it has allowed me to know better, even on the human level, those who share this adventure and commitment with me.

The most intense times of work and sharing were those lived with the religious (men and women Delegates, but also the Vicar and General Consulter of the Salesian Family and, I would say, with the Rector Major himself), from whom I always sought to take counsel, solutions, or even simple, (but no less precious) information on our shared history and vocational, charismatic dimension. I do not know if I, in turn, succeeded in transferring elements of the secular life that were quantitatively and qualitatively significant that could favor an exchange and therefore reciprocal growth with the religious members called to share this long journey with me, but I believe that some sign or springboard would have been caught!



Rosario Maiorano

World Coordinator

Association of Salesian Cooperators

Nothing by chance

In life it happens that one's human experience is inlaid with episodes that in some way condition the rest of existence. At 9 years of age I remained an orphan because my father was cut down by an incurable illness. Having won a scholarship that allowed me to earn a degree in higher studies, I began to frequent an FMA house. When I found myself working in the FMA Past Pupil Association, I became aware that this dealt with a true and proper vocation.

Yes, I was "called" to live Salesian spirituality as a secular person. Then, drawn into this adventure through an explicit request from my Federation, I offered myself as a candidate in the Confederation Council and I found myself having to study the figure of Mother Mazzarello to verify if it would be possible that in our times for the laity to live the spirituality proper to the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians.

My relationship with the FMA is a mature rapport between women who look in the same direction, who share the same Spirituality with, however, the connotations specific to a state. It is a relationship that allows for reciprocal enrichment, beginning from a shared baptismal root, the consecrated woman offers the witness of a life totally given to Christ and the laywoman, the contribution of an existence spent in service to others with a style of relationship proper to Salesian-Mornesian Spirituality lived in daily life.

This presupposes reciprocal esteem that is constructed on a daily basis with tenacity and at times, with suffering because there is nothing taken for granted or preconceived. The journey of real sharing and co-responsibility is well on its way between Institute and Association. But the Institute and the Association are not mere emblematic entities. They are made up of persons and everything is played out in interpersonal relationships. I believe that there are two attitudes that run the risk of invalidating relationships between the laity and consecrated persons and harming communion and the shared evangelization project. On the part of the laity there is the misunderstood pretext that the Consecrated

must be irreproachable and infallible. On the part of the Consecrated the pride of their own position in the Church, a type of superiority that can be manifested in holding that the laity are mere collaborators in a work that remains, however, always their own. I, too, have experienced these attitudes, but I have never let them get the best of me. For me, every FMA is a sister. There runs in our veins that same Salesian blood enriched by the "feminine genius of Mary Domenica Mazzarello". If it means loving, each of us can take the first step.

Carolina Fiorica

President of the World Confederation
Past Pupils of the FMA

Castelnuovo Nigra

A roof, a heart

All began with the first meeting of the Solidarity Commission of the Confederation Council elected at the Worldwide Assembly in 2003. Among the many proposals that emerged was: "And if we were to create a Past Pupil House?" In reality, this had always been a dream. Someone said that it was not our charism to dedicate ourselves to the elderly! But this was not what we wanted to do. And the President, aware of an "old" dream of the Association said: "I am not against the idea!"

After a few months, the treasurer was radiant as she telephoned: "I found the House!" The Piedmont province, involved in the sector of its own restructuring, had to "close", among others, even the house of spirituality and welcome of Castelnuovo Nigra. It seemed perfect for our needs: large, welcoming, situated in a natural environment suited for repose and meditation. But it was no small undertaking.

The entire Council of the confederation threw themselves into this undertaking with passion, determination and a pinch of recklessness. And the Institute took a leap in the dark. When the idea was shared, it took its place at our side and helped us in a thousand ways. There were many great difficulties. But we found unsuspected

energies. It was as though Someone was working for us and pushing us forward. Where would we find the money for this enormous work? First of all we had to update the house in accordance with legal norms and the amount necessary made our heads spin. I remember that one day my daughter, a lawyer, scolded me and challenged me with the words: “Are you trying to be like Don Bosco...Providence...” I responded simply “Yes”.

Now the house is in our hands, entrusted to the management of the Confederation that holds the permission for use granted by the Piedmont Province. It functions at full speed for spirituality and cultural encounters; it welcomes those who would want to profit by days of sojourn in a natural, relaxing and invigorating environment.

This is an initiative that is a concrete way of real sharing and co-responsibility between the Institute and the Association, one that was constructed *together*...together with the first steps, together for the bureaucratic and financial procedures, together for the use of the house.

The FMA continue, in fact, to frequent Castelnovo Nigra for the spiritual retreat, as they always did.

The Oñondivemi experience Together with love

The word *Oñondivemi* is from the *Guarani*, the official language of the Republic of Paraguay. The root word *oñondive* means together, union, communion, while the suffix *mi* means welcome, solidarity, affection, tenderness, love. It is the name of a community project carried out by the laity and FMA in the city of Villetta networking with the *International Christian Child Care Foundation (CCCI)* of Canada for the uprooting of childhood poverty in the area. One of the objectives of the Project is reinforcing awareness and soliciting the support of the Catholic community around the emergency of children and young people who live in situations of poverty without the opportunity for development and education. For some time the presence of the FMA in

Villetta found itself in crisis, without economic resources to support the urgent services for the people.

The Province was at the point of closing a work that had known a flourishing past through its workrooms of artisan weaving, of the *ñandutí*, a fine, characteristic lace. A significant group of committed lay people among who were past pupils, parents, young people of the Salesian Youth Movement, could not resign themselves to this closing, especially when faced with the great number of street children, who did not have the possibility of studying, were malnourished, easy prey to alcoholism, drugs, and prostitution. The reality became a strong challenge for the FMA and the laity when they came to know the work of the CCCI. One of the requisites of the Foundation is working in teams, but the ground had already been prepared thanks to a journey of close collaboration and communion that had been lived between laity and Sisters. Today they work together carrying out a work that offers a response to the needs of 420 people, between children and young people, and they hope to arrive at 1,000, embracing children from early elementary age to those who are finishing secondary school. Four lay people and two FMA form the team of persons who are responsible: the directress, two field educators, one secretary, and two teachers for scholastic support. All receive economic remuneration from the CCCI. But there is also the team for extended services (doctors, psychologists, tailors, shoemakers...) the laity of the place, in who agree with the Project.

The accompaniment of the children and young people is the most delicate and difficult mission. Even the work with the families is arduous, slow, and requires patience, but it is bearing much fruit. FMA and laity, inseparable in this Project, offer a periodic formative program to parents with a space for explicit evangelization and the study of the Social Doctrine of the Church

Oñondivemi, laity and FMA, together with love, can restore dignity to families that have lost the hope and possibility of educating their children.

Close up

Formative Studies



**Educational and Formative
Biblical Studies**

The Lamp
Pray and Contemplate
Fifth step of the *lectio*



Graziella Curti

We are at the fifth step of the *lectio divina* that we have sought to present in our magazine. Certainly, each day these steps that introduce us to the encounter with the Lord come in shorter, more concentrated time.

For this reason they have to be prepared for in advance.

The whole day must have as its background the echo of the Word that that has been meditated or that which we will contemplate the next morning. Only in this way, making a place for Scripture in our life, will we succeed in realizing true prayer, that inspired by God Himself. And by the grace of the Spirit, the inner teacher, we will also reach contemplation that is “the natural fruit of our prayed reading”.

Respond to God

When you listen, God speaks to you; when you pray, you speak to God. (St. Ambrose)

Prayer is like breathing, It is our response to the God of life that speaks to us continually and whom we can hear. But it is precisely from the Word that our prayer takes its origin. It cannot come from another source that would not have a suitable language. Given that Scripture originated from the Spirit, the prayer that follows must be formed by the same Spirit, one that was “preceded by its incarnation”. The repetition of evangelical expression constitutes, according to the times and sentiments that we have in our heart, the invocation of forgiveness, the song of love, the supplication anchored in our prayer. In this proposal, St. Augustine warns us: “Do not

say anything without Him and He will not say anything without you.”

God reveals Himself to those who call upon Him and he speaks with the same accents, with His language.

With one’s whole being

***My strength and my song is the Lord.
He is the Savior of Israel.***

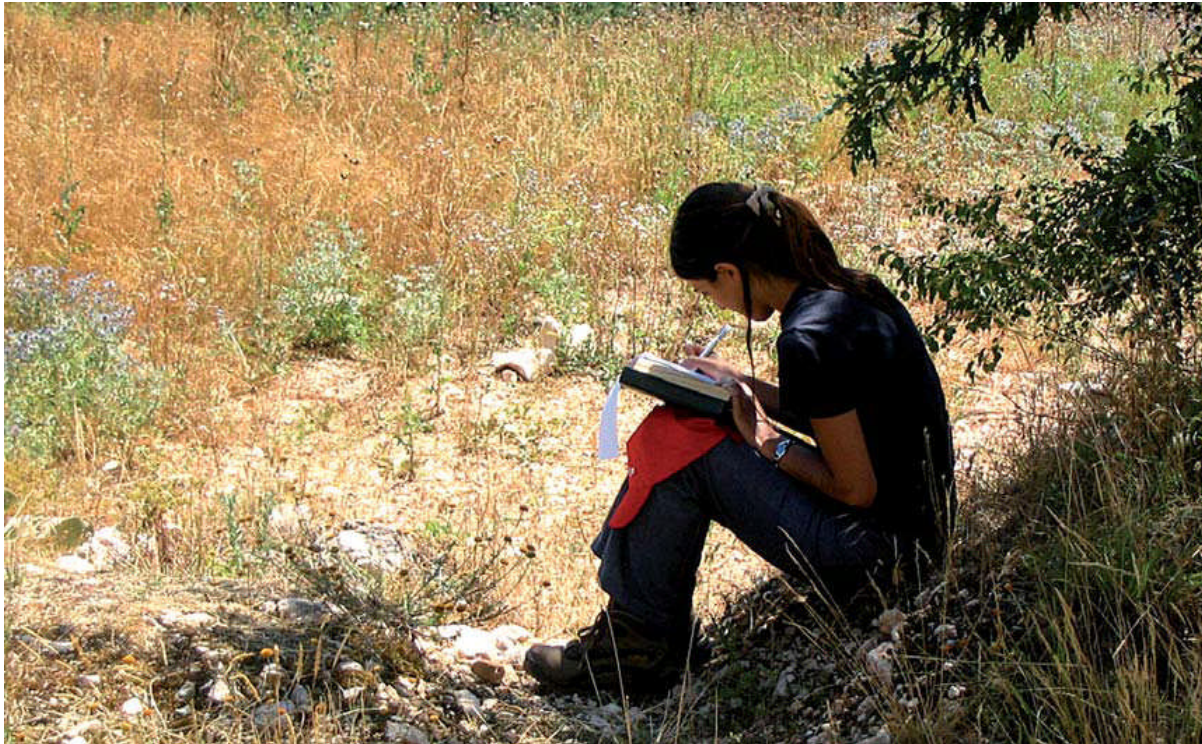
Only the mystics could attempt to stutter some words on the contemplation that at times follows prayer. In addition to the saints like Teresa of Avila, John of the Cross and many others who make up the Christian experience, there are also the ancient Sufi of the East who turn to God and immerse themselves fully in Him to the point of contemplating the mystery and incarnating His voice.

Galal Al-Din-Rumi, medieval Persian poet and mystic, wrote: “You are the sea and I swim in you like a fish;/You are the desert and I traverse you like a gazelle./Fill me with your breath. I cannot live without it,/ because I am your oboe. And I play...”

It is usually not habitual to arrive at contemplation; this remains a gift, a gift from God. When we are invaded, let us welcome it in thanksgiving.

Thanksgiving

***We give you thanks, Lord, for all your benefits,
for everything that you have created for our
joy, but especially for all that you are !***



Being able to do *lectio divina* every day, being able to approach the Word in peace is such a great gift and there are many who envy us. The only sentiment that could come from this divine gift is gratitude. The fruit of assiduousness to the Word is also an attitude of wonder before the many graces that we receive each day, for the beauty that we find on our way, the tenderness that is given to us and that we can give, the warmth of family and the community in which we live. Saying thank you means trying at every moment to put into practice this Word that has reached our solitude and illumined it.

Even Mary Domenica Mazzarello

Her joyous life of working in the fields, her generous dedication to the family, her prayer throughout the day and in the evening, from the little window, eye of her contemplation, always had the tone of gratitude. Mary Domenica was grateful to God for the fruit of the earth, for the vineyards on the hillsides, for the long, colorful

sunsets of Mornese, for the flow of the seasons. And she especially thanked the Lord for the family He had given her, for the possibility of meeting with Him in the Eucharist, for the new Sisters that He gave her, notwithstanding obstacles and difficulties. Her prayer spread to the world. It was contemplation, passion for God and for His creatures.

Why the *lectio*

It is necessary to read the Bible in a living way, seeking what it signifies, making an effort to scrutinize its actual judgment on history, the Church, on us. The Word is the strength of God and judges every situation today. How am I to listen to it, therefore, in such a way as to take in not only the echoes of then, of the time in which it was written, but the living message that regards me today? (Enzo Bianchi)

The Gospel in Life



The Last Page of the Gospel

The Gospel in life

God, where are you?

Hab 1, 2-3; 2-4; Lk 17, 5-10

It is easy for me to imagine that you, too, were struck by the disconsolate words of the prophet Habakkuk. I ask myself why do they strike us so? On the one hand, I think, it is because we feel in them a burning reality. These were times, those of the prophet, in which, under the dominion of the tyrant Joachim, people saw the raging injustice and corruption, the laceration of the social fabric and civil co-existence: “why, Lord, do you show me crimes and injustice, why do you put before me violence and destruction, why do quarrels and contestation arise? Laws fall by the wayside; rights do not win out, the evil deceive the innocent, rights are violated.”

How Long, O Lord?

This is the disturbing question of the prophet, a question that seems to ask us: “How long, Lord, will I implore and not be heard, and I will raise the cry to you: ‘Violence’ and not succor?” It is a question that we find more and more on the lip of people: Why doesn’t God intervene? Where is God?

Listening to the cry of the prophet, if on the one hand we feel that we are interpreted, on the other we are assailed by a thought, a devastating doubt, yes, I say devastating. But if things are like

this, if today after millennia of the journey of humanity we are still at this point, should we not, perhaps, conclude that the world is like this and that it is impossible to change things, that it is an illusion? And that, for the

most part, something different, for believers, can only happen in the beyond? You understand, it is a doubt, a thought that crosses the country of the heart. And it is, as I said, devastating.

It is devastating because it makes us lose heart, become resigned, empties us and leads us to give up. The prophet Habakkuk said words that should make us reflect also with regard to certain discourses that we hear today or that we may take part in, discourses that are tinged with defeatism.

He said: “The person who does not have an upright soul succumbs, while the just man lives of faith.” Therefore the one who gives up is the one who does not have an upright soul or who does not have faith. Our quitting, therefore, is a sign of a soul that is less upright or one that has a faith that is not faith.

Lord, increase our faith

Here there comes on the scene the selection from the Gospel of Luke that we heard today with its entirely intriguing message. There is a request from the apostles that seems so legitimate: “Lord, increase our faith.” Even that request comes from an awareness of something that is disproportionate. Jesus had hardly finished entrusting an arduous,

almost impossible task: “What ? You say that we have to be vigilant against scandals, resist forcefully and then you that us that, however, if one sins seven times seven in a day and asks forgiveness you will forgive them. But what you are asking is impossible.

Increase our faith! Jesus said that it was not a question of more or less faith, but of having or not having it, because if you have even a crumb, a fragment as big as a mustard seed, you will be able to say to this mulberry tree : “Uproot yourself and be transplanted into the sea” and it would listen to you. Just the mulberry tree, you understand, the tree that was considered to have the most tenacious roots in the earth! Things happen that go beyond the possibility of human prevision.

Helpless, barefoot

And if too often I have the words “impossible” or “it has always been that way” on my lips, I must draw a conclusion. It is not that I need greater faith but rather that I do not have authentic faith.

A crumb would be enough as long as the faith does not rest on human strategies, on earthly support. Faith rests on God’s promise. Even if you feel tiny, tiny, like a grain of mustard seed, think that there could happen what would seem impossible because “nothing is impossible to God.”

Who has faith does not give up, even if one is weak, even if one is defenseless.

We all have been spectators struck by and fascinated with the faith of the Buddhist monks of Burma. Their saffron- red tunics remain in our sight. And it was, if you think well, the disproportion that impressed us: their weakness before the power of the

tyrant, like David’s five stones before the powerful armor, the accessories of Goliath. Whoever has faith does not succumb, does not quit. Then we, you know, are ready to discuss whether Buddhism is or is not faith. Then later we are ready to give up long before they do !

The fresh air of the Gospel

And in this light of the recognized littleness and of the recognized power of God we could read the parable of the servant who returns from the fields or flocks.

Where, we must immediately say, Jesus is far from approving arrogant or despotic actions on the part of those who command, but desires instead to invite us once and for all to free our religious attitude from a commercial criteria: I gave to you, you owe me.”

Freeing from “religiosity” and the life of pretension of recognition and of titles, from our empty ambition: “So it is that you, too, when you have done what has been commanded of you, must say: ‘We are useless servants. We have done only what we had to do.’” Useless servants...not in the sense that what was done is not important, but in the sense that we become proud and exalt ourselves.

Little servants. That how beautiful it is, what air of the Gospel we breathe, there where it urges us each day to hold faithfully to our task is not the thirst for medals, nor for titles nor for bows and applause, but only the joy of having done what has been asked of us.

Simply and for the beauty of doing it. Then there is good, not polluted air. The good air of the Gospel.

Angelo Casati

DIALOGO
Bruna Grassini

Dialogue The Dialogue of Salvation

Bruna Grassini

Dialogue could be a source of enrichment and of fruitful cooperation.

This leads to reciprocal communication of the reasons for one's own faith. The sometimes profound difference between beliefs does not impede dialogue, rather could be offered to God in humility and trust because He is greater than our heart. The commitment of the Church in dialogue flows from the initiative of God and from the example of Jesus Christ whose life, death, and resurrection have given the fullest expression to this dialogue.

(DM Document, 35-1984/DA 53, 1991)

Turkey could be considered the cradle of Christianity after the Holy Land. Vatican reporter Aldo Maria Valli writes: "At the beginning of the Twentieth Century 32% were Christian and today they are fewer than .1%. What are the causes of this situation? On what does the expansion of Islam and the internal division of Christians depend? Are we facing a defeat or a providential design that invites Christians to evaluate the reasons for their own faith in comparison with others?"

When in 2002 we saw the beginning of the building of the "wall of separation" between Palestine and Jerusalem, Pope John Paul II launched a warning: "The Holy Land does not need walls, but rather bridges. We cannot put up walls. That contradicts what the teacher Jesus did, coming to knock down walls of separation." We must finally abandon attitudes of counter-position and of suspicion. To

support our own identity it is not necessary that we distance ourselves. On the contrary, it is in meeting one another that there emerges the richness of faith, of tradition, of shared values.

Let us remember the cry of John Paul II at the Prayer vigil for peace in 1993: "Be open. Open

your heart to God. True peace, that which Jesus left us, rests on

justice, it flourishes in love and in reconciliation. Peace on earth is our task today."

The courage to dialogue

An Arabian poet wrote: "Peace is made up of a million gold threads, of silk, of almond flowers, of sparks of light."

Pope Benedict XVI, in speaking to religious, said: "Peace is gift and responsibility. We have a binding duty to be authentic witnesses to fraternity, witnesses of Christ, ready to line up on the side of the weak, the foreigner, and the poor, to share the message of the love of God, even though this should imply detachment and sacrifice to the point of giving our life."

So it was that Fr. Andrea Santoro had chosen Turkey, to witness to the faith, love, and the seeking of a way of peace: a dialogue made up of hope and of sharing.

"I left to live in the city of Abraham", he wrote to his parishioners in Rome, "to live a life full of gratitude and respect for this land, to light a tiny, humble spark of dialogue, of good relationships, of an exchange of spiritual gifts among Judaism, Christianity and Islam." From the first journey to Turkey, when Fr. Andrea was still a seminarian, he felt the attraction of the Land of God and the need to discover the "face of Islam", the origins of the Church with its cultural and religious traditions. But beyond these discoveries Fr. Andrea sought a place in which to "live" with God, to have time to listen to Him, to proceed in God's custody", convinced that inter-religious dialogue could give a reciprocal contribution to the solution of shared problems.

He frequently repeated: "Only by dialoguing do we really encounter and build unity."

“The door is open



Fr. Andrea Santoro sought dialogue, convinced that East and West, Christianity and Islam must speak to one another and meet one another in the image that they have of God, of religion, of the person, and of society. Dialoguing is not renouncing the Christian proclamation. On the contrary, it means speaking the Gospel clearly with words and witness, but not with an antagonistic spirit. The Christian cannot feel that he/she is the enemy of the one who does not think in the same way. The passion for dialogue urged Fr. Andrea to the point of heroism in sharing, in silent, loving presence, in the expectation that God works in His own time, known to Him alone. To those who advised him to set a limited time for the opening of the Parish, he responded: “The doors are open...they are a ‘sign’ of love for all without distinction; everyone is a friend in force of the love that does not judge, does not establish times, or hierarchies. Like Jesus, who welcomed Nicodemus who came to find Him by night.” His last letter dated January 26, 2006, is an authentic testament. With words fraught with love for the Turkish people, he proposed to all his method: “Have an open, courageous heart for all.” From here there is born the trust gifted as being “diverse” and making oneself the least for the Gospel. For this reason inter-religious dialogue can be called the Dialogue of Salvation “in so far as Christian understanding of salvation, the personal call of God and the free gift that He makes of Himself, work of mediation of Jesus Christ and of the Holy Spirit” (DA, 40).

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Arianna's Line

Reciprocity

Giuseppina Teruggi

In speaking of the monthly letters of *La Madre*, the echoes that come back to us are always positive and full of gratitude. A short time ago, in a familiar conversation, Mother herself brought out that interest was particularly strong for the circulars dealing with *relationships* (cfr *circ* 887, 888).

It is a topic that touches us in a vital way and it constitutes one of the challenges of our community experience. It is, therefore, a typical dimension of every human life because the person is essentially relational. "We become a person through rapport with reciprocity and in relationship, because being for *one another* is the constitutive element that renders the human being a person" (Paul Ricoeur).

Relationship is reciprocity

Relationship, in the personalistic view, is understood as reciprocity. The encounter of the "I" with the "you" needs to find a receptive correspondence and response, and the gift of self needs to have a resonance. "The person," notes Giulia Paola Di Nicola, "requires not only the development of her capacities of leaving self aside, but also the verification of a similar attitude in the other person, one that nourishes rapport, creating a shared reality."

The relationship of reciprocity is recognizing the *person in first place* accepting he/she is for what they are, beyond qualities and competence. It means placing self in the logic of giving-receiving, in confronting values, projects, on the basis of a dynamic equilibrium between personal autonomy

and belonging to a group, between responsibility and the needs of others, between being oneself and the possibility of an exchange with others. There is also a contrast between reciprocity and the attitude of one who wants at any cost to affirm self to the point of opposing others; between the one who closes self up in personal qualities to the point of excluding whoever is different, the one who does not want to share the qualities he/she possesses.

"If you and I exchange a dollar, we will still have a dollar each. If, instead, we exchange an idea, you will have two and so will I", said Dan Zara an American mass communications expert. It seems a consideration that we take for granted. In reality, it affirms a truth that is not always easy to assume. Exchanging things is a gesture that leaves us in the same condition as before, and it could also be a sign of egoism: I give to you and you give to me. Exchanging ideas or love, instead, is enrichment. We are both more gifted, happier, more "person". Some people have a life overflowing with things and are poor in happiness because in their rapport they follow the idea of calculations. It is facing ideas, reciprocity in love that transforms the soul and renders it capable of enjoying the beauty of life.

Reciprocity, however, is not only a relationship of giving and receiving. It is the very essence of life that is generated, evolved to the fullness only thanks to it. The relationship with another precedes me. For this reason I am called to accept the other person, appreciating their gifts,

of being responsible with regard to them, experiencing change as a principle and place of growth and personal formation. In community reciprocity is founded on sharing the same charism, the same vocational identity. The more it assumes the charism, the more it becomes natural for us to decide to be in relationships with the Sisters who have received the same gift of the Spirit, aware of not being proprietors of our own life or the only interpreters of our journey, but of *belonging to others* of *being part* of a plan that surpasses us, which we recognize. It is a plan that belongs to all and is entrusted to all.

Different relationship styles

When a relationship is not established on reciprocity, communication is asymmetrical; the other becomes an alienated being, someone who is “different”. Then we sharpen the social uneasiness and closeness that could only lead to an entire mass.

It happens at times that the relationship between persons or the gift of self does not find resonance. One seeks to build bridges which, however, are not accepted by the other side and this creates a situation of aridity, of formality, lacking in the warmth of life. Good will on the part of an individual that does not find confirmation on the part of the interlocutor or the group, is not in vain. However the lack of reciprocity could wear itself out in the confirmation of personal value of one of the interlocutors, but it does not build a true relationship.

The person could commit self in a sacrificial donation without limits, and without time, but it is a tension that is perhaps heroic, but also frustrating and

penalizing. It is, perhaps, in the long run, unproductive.

The gift of self must arouse a response in a circularity of giving and receiving, to satisfy the fundamental human need of loving and being loved, of collaborating and co-existing. All in a dynamism of communion.

It is evident that an interpersonal relationship is exposed to conditioning bound to the psychology of each person, to culture, to history. However, it becomes reciprocity when one raises the other to her level or accepts being raised to that of the other, respecting the difference that transcends, but also deeply feeling equality.

At the same time, reciprocity does not level people to the point of making them uniform and incapable of being themselves in an original and free way. We have here the challenge between reciprocity and respect for difference. There is a goal to be sought: to arrive at a human and spiritual maturity that will train us to relate with other in the free and gratuitous gift without precluding dialogue, meeting, the exchange of ideas and values. This is true even when one is different because of formation, culture and a way of looking at things. And even when the resonance is not immediately positive. Frequently reciprocity rests on what is complementary, on the harmonious composition of difference, on the capacity of expectation.

The life together that we carry out in community does not exempt us from a given fact: living reciprocal relationships is trying. We see this at times in ourselves when we respond mutely or with indifference to people, or to situations that are in contrast to our way of seeing or feeling. When we react aggressively in meeting with one who

incarnates a life style of which we do not approve, or one that does not simply respond to our expectations. We live reciprocal relationships when we assume the passive behavior that closes us up in choices of individualism, without guaranteed tranquility, without enthusiasm and without passion.

At times we claim the right of autonomy, relying on our capacity to face situations, excluding confrontation or avoiding the guidance that could illumine us. This too, is a threat to reciprocity. The generation gap is more and more evident in many communities and could expose us to the same threat. Living together we might find ourselves facing conflicts determined by different ages, and it is possible that the young people look at reality in an idealistic way, giving themselves a standard of “it should be” while the Sisters of a greater age limit themselves to offering prudent solutions and going back to “solid” experience.

To the point of becoming for one another

Today in the Institute there are fruitful journeys of formation in act, such as the *Educating Community*, in a broad network of relationships with young people, collaborators, and parents.

Generally, our relational efficacy follows a process that goes from relationships with the persons closest to us to those whom we reach in the educating mission; from the religious community to the more vast educating community of which we are a part. All relationships are experiential ways on which we can question ourselves. Some of these can be deduced from the magazine *Witnesses* (15/01/2007).

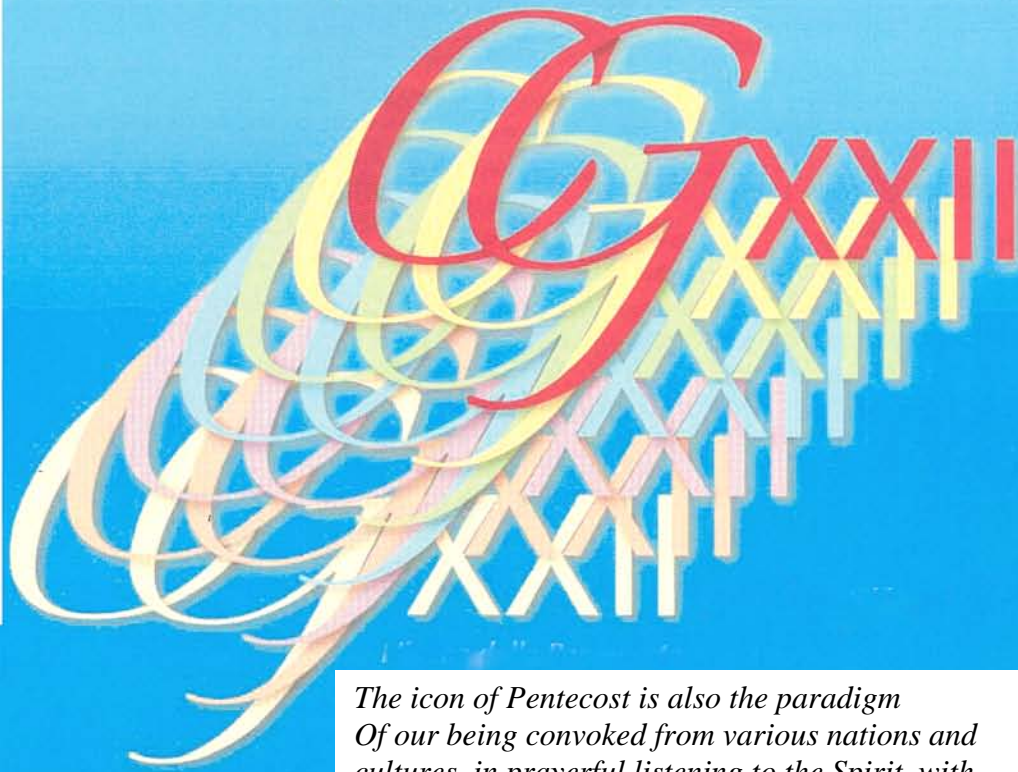
One in the other. We are called to feel grafted into another, because a vital lymph runs through us and renders us one sole body, rooted in the one life, Jesus Christ. This brings with it the logic of entrusting self to another, trustingly, rejecting every form of monopoly, not putting upon ourselves and our things a stamp of private property. It also brings the logic of reciprocal acceptance, which is the heart of living together.

Acceptance, even before gestures, touches the heart of a person; it creates closeness, knocks down fences, divisions, prejudice, fears and suspicion.

One with the other. This way leads us to co-responsibility, and the maturing of the certainty that we are responsible for one another and that together we are building a shared project. It is necessary that we educate ourselves and allow ourselves to be educated to reciprocal involvement that surpasses an facile delegating, closing one’s self up in a private world. It is also important we care for those who live at our side, being able to reciprocally intervene in one another’s lives. Living together leads toward fullness of humanity when it opens us to the possibility of forgiveness, of fraternal correction, of reciprocal accompaniment toward shared goals.

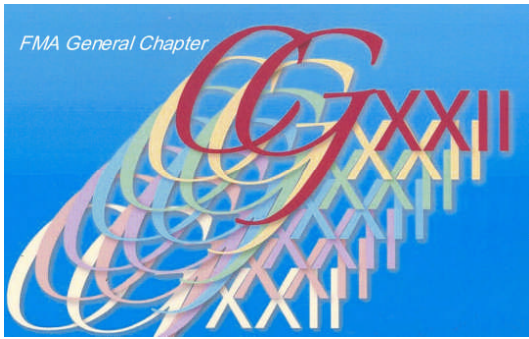
One for another. This is the highpoint of reciprocal, sacrificial love that arrives at the availability of the total gift of self. Its foundation is dedication to Jesus, who made Himself gift for others, to the point of extreme consequences. It defines the height of love because it implies total gratuity, without pretending anything for self; it is service without discount and without measure. Even when it risks not being exchanged. Reciprocity then becomes a slow and difficult journey, which, sooner or later, will bear its fruit! It is transformed in the depth of the heart in gratitude because even the desire to give is a great gift.

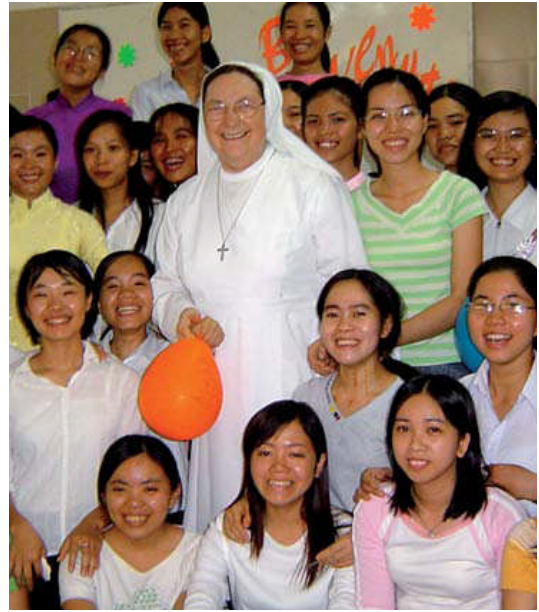
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*The icon of Pentecost is also the paradigm
Of our being convoked from various nations and
cultures, in prayerful listening to the Spirit, with
Mary, and sent by the Risen Christ, to have
renewed enthusiasm in bringing the love of the
Father to young people.*

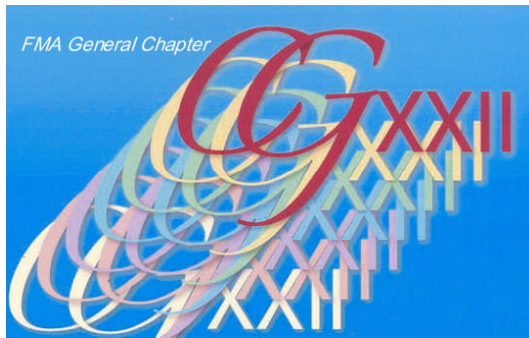






*Called today
to be Signs
and expressions
of the all-
foreseeing
Love of God*





THE GREATEST CHALLENGE...



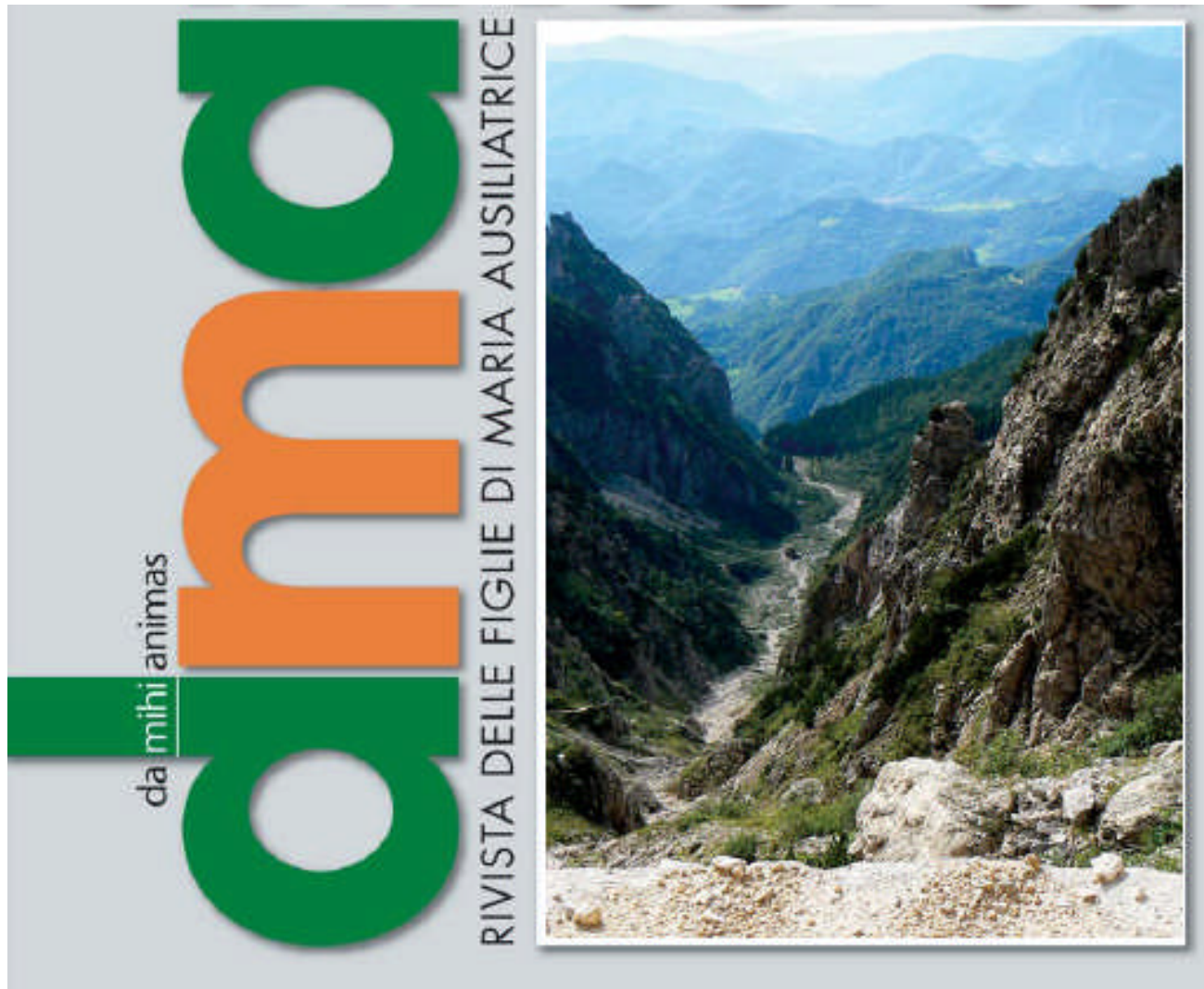
“Love constitutes the dynamic nucleus of the experience of Don Bosco and of Maria Domenica: the depth of their communion with God and the placing of themselves at the school of Mary rendered them attentive and sensitive to perceive the cry for help from the young who are poor and abandoned; daring and creative in responding to the needs of their times.

The all-foreseeing love of God opened us to the newness of the Spirit that urges us toward ever new frontiers in the multi-cultural and multi-religious contexts in which we find ourselves working. The greatest challenge for us today remains like that at the origins of the Institute...that of making the young people understand that God loves them.

This is the Gospel that all know how to read, even those who have not yet received the proclamation of Christian faith.”

(Letter of la Madre in preparation for GC XXII

IN SEARCH OF



*Gospel reading
Of contemporary facts*

Cooperation and Development

For qualified work

Mara Borsi

Last month the FMA of the Province “St. Michael Archangel” of Paraguay, in the city of Villaricca situated in the District of Guairá, started a development project for the professional formation of girls and women in difficulty. From 1900, the year of the foundation of the nation, the FMA have bravely stood at the side of the young people.

Paraguay is experiencing one of the most profound crisis of its history. After 60 years of government by the *Colorado* Party, the people expected changes that would produce more social justice and an equitable distribution of wealth.

During the first half of 2007, out of a population of 6 million people, 300,000 Paraguayans emigrated, there is a 20% unemployment rate for young people, the minimum salary is \$200, and 16.4% of the population lives on less than a dollar a day.

The situation in which children, adolescents and young people find themselves is particularly difficult. Here are a few interesting statistics: 727,976 children live in extreme poverty; the number of poor adolescents reaches 67%, the number of poor young people has gone from 45,937 (1997 count) to 112,463 today.

In this difficult situation the FMA are at the side of the people who suffer because of the poverty and lack of work. Schools, communities inserted in the outskirts of the city, houses for street children, sharing life with the indigenous

Ayoreos, Chamacocos, and Maskoy constitutes the scenario of the province mission.

The presence at Villaricca

Villaricca, the most important city in the District of Guairá, is situated at 172 km from Asuncion, the capital of the nation. During the last ten years, there has been a notable development in university formation, so much so that it is considered to be the university city of Paraguay. There are many young people who arrive from every part of the country to frequent especially the Faculty of Medicine at the Catholic University that is the most renowned and even attracts students from abroad. The FMA presence at Villaricca goes back to 1932, the year of the foundation of the first community. Today, however, there are only two houses in the city.

In 1964 Bishop Augustin Rodriguez asked the FMA to take on the direction of a charitable institution for young women and mothers. So it was that with the change of management, and with the arrival of the FMA, it became Sacred Heart House.

During the course of the years the house has always remained faithful to its mission of promoting the formation of young people and of women. It is situated on the outskirts of the city and offers a free School for poor children *of* and *in* the streets and an Academy of Tailoring and Sewing and Culinary Arts. Last March, in collaboration with the different groups among which is the

Italian Episcopal Conference, project of cooperation for development that has as its aim to promote the quality of professional formation courses for sewing and cooking was started. The courses are recognized and certified by the Ministry of Education and Culture. Through the project the FMA intend to begin a form of regional handicrafts that utilize embroidered fabrics called "*ao po'i*", typical of the *guaireña* culture and area and very much appreciated in the country and abroad. Cotton produced locally is used in the working of this fabric for both the fabric and the embroidery.

The project

80 young people and women of the area benefit directly from the project. In the FMA activity, in order to guarantee continuity, others involved in the project and partner are the Bishop, the Parents' Association and the parish of the neighborhood in which the work is located. The objectives that the project intends to reach in the next two years are those of promoting the professionalism of the girls and women so that they can reach the world of work with honest activity, reinforcing their identity so that they may acquire a human maturity sufficient for them to live family, social and professional life efficaciously, to

appreciate work as a source of support for personal and family well-being. Through theoretical and practical teaching, the periodical encounters with the embroiderers of Yataty, a typical place of the *ao po'I* the activities of exposition and commercialization of products manufactured during the courses. The project seeks to help the young people and the women to learn to develop a stock based on the demand for materials; to know how to use the machines and means relative to the courses frequented (machines to manufacture clothing, materials for industrial kitchens, etc); to act with professional ethics and to have access to the marketplace in a qualified manner.

The communities and the families of the women and girls will be the indirect beneficiaries of this formative activity that hopes to increase the quality of life and to fight against exclusion.

The awareness that the formation of the woman produces the improvement of life conditions for children sustains the hope of being able to go against the situations of poverty, and abandonment of children, adolescents and young people.

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Justice and Peace shall kiss

(Psalm 84-85,11)

Julia Arciniegas

Psalm 84 (85) sings of the hope of the Hebrew people who had just escaped from slavery. They had been freed from Babylonian exile and were returning the Promised Land.

While they dreamed of having finally won serenity and peace, returning home they encountered destruction, hunger, violence, and death. For this reason, remembering the benefits received, they insistently begged God: *“Will you not return to give us life, so that your people may rejoice?”*

In response to the prayer there arose a prophetic voice that proclaimed a message of peace, of mercy, of truth and of justice. God promised to once again take His place in the midst of the people, purified by prison and suffering.

“I will listen to what the Lord God says: he proclaims peace for his people, for his faithful ones, for those who return to him with all their heart. Mercy and truth meet; justice and peace kiss...truth will bud forth on the earth and justice will look down from heaven...Justice will walk before him and salvation on the way of his steps.”

Prayer and prophecy find their fulfillment in the coming of Christ: *“He, in fact, is our peace” (Eph 2,14), and “He has become for us wisdom, justice, sanctification and redemption” (1 Cor 1,30)*

With this certainty, in the advent of history, still marked by the scourge of injustice that generates every type of poverty, the people of God still today continue to evoke peace, the fullness of messianic gifts.

Peace, the fruit of justice

The rapport between peace and justice is so close that they become an inseparable

reality. This is noted in the text from Isaiah who describes peace as the fruit of justice: *“Right will dwell in the desert and justice abide in the orchard. Justice will bring about peace; right will produce calm and security” (Is 32,16-18).*

The apostle James re-affirms this rapport inverting the terms: *“The fruit of righteousness is sown in peace for those who cultivate peace” (James 3,18).* True peace cannot bear with oppression, nor can it co-exist with injustice. *“Saying peace, in fact,”* is postulating a condition of authentic respect of the dignity and rights of every human being, so as to allow them to realize themselves in full.”

This affirmation from John Paul II recurs every year, in one perspective or another, in the Message for the World Day of Peace. *“Can there be true peace when men, women and children cannot live their full human dignity? Can there be lasting peace in a world regulated by social, economic and political relationships that favor a group or nation at the expense of another? In the respect for human rights we find the secret of true peace” (Idem,1999).*

Blessed are those who build peace

How can we remain indifferent in the face of the suffering of those who have been stripped of all because of a devastating war that has lasted for more than twenty years, that has destroyed Nations and taken so many lives? The situation in South Sudan has once again cried out to men and women religious who have been present in that African country for so many years.

The bishops of the region have turned to the Commission for Justice, Peace, and the

Integrity of the Created, of the two International Unions of Superiors General (USG/UISG), with a pressing SOS before the critical reality of the people of Sudan.

There was an immediate positive response. "If you seek peace, go to meet the poor!"

This entrustment resounded in the heart of the delegation of the religious who, urged to actively share with God that preferential love for them (Cfr. SRS,42), had gone to study the situation in the indicated area.

Though Sudan is a nation rich in natural resources, the results of conflict could not be more dramatic. Traveling through the villages they could see very well that nothing can be resolved with war; all has been seriously compromised by war: the suffering of the poor has become worse, rather it has created a new class of the poor,

destroying means of sustenance, homes, property and corroding the very fabric of the life environment.

The gradual interest of the religious institute has set into motion an inter-congregational plan of solidarity that uses concrete gestures to re-affirm the option taken together in the Congress on Consecrated Life (2004): *Passion for Christ, passion for humanity*".

When the advancement of the dignity of the person is the guiding principle to which one aspires, when the seeking for the common good constitutes the predominant commitment, then there is a solid and lasting foundation for the edification of peace.

The pillars of true peace are justice and that particular form of love that is forgiveness"

(John Paul II, 2001).

SOLIDARITY PROJECT WITH SOUTH SUDAN

The General scope of this inter-congregational project in favor of Human rights, promoted by USG/UISG, is helping to rebuild a society and a nation that has been devastated by war and to act in such a way that the most important element is a local, qualified personnel.

For this reason, the project proposes the creation of a Formation Institute for Teachers and a formation Institute for Health workers. The direction of these Centers has been assumed by the Brothers of the Christian Schools and by the Comboni Mission Sisters, respectively.

Fifty-nine Congregations have already taken a precise commitment within the project, through the offering of personnel and/or funds.

In February, 2008, the first group made up of three De La Salle Brothers and one FMA went to Malakal to begin the Formation Program for Teachers. In April they began English courses for 75 teachers already in service and radio personnel. They are presently working with a few experts from the place for the definition of the entire educational project.

Before the end of the present year, at least 17 new missionaries will be working in South Sudan.

Photo



click

Your most beautiful photos...

We publish some of the photos that arrived in our office. You will find others in successive issues of magazine. We thank those who entered the contest and those who will still do so. The name of the winner will be announced in the next issue



Between heaven and earth...

Is there something more? Is there someone up there who awaits us? Perhaps they are sending us signs that we do not know how to see.

(Michal Kropidto-Warsaw, Poland)



Joy of living

Joy of living

The desire to learn and to fly

(Nicole Ann F. Galang-Balibago
Angeles City- Pampanga)



Anticipating springtime

New life, joy and hope
(Community of Geneva, Switzerland)



Students

A multitude of young people, to guide them:
“I will give you the Teacher”
(Instituto Maria Auxiliadora , Rio do Sul-
Brazil)
Polis

Civic Virtue

Anna Rita Cristaino

In his address of June 1st to the members of the “*Centesimus Annus-Pro Pontifice Foundation*” Pope Benedict XVI emphasized that only a shared culture of responsible and active participation could allow every human being to feel that they are not mere users or passive witnesses in the process of world development”. He cited the following selection from *Gaudium et Spes*: “*Christians could desire nothing more ardently than to serve the people of the contemporary world with generosity and efficacy. Therefore, adhering to the Gospel and benefiting from this strength, united with all those who love and practice justice, they have assumed an immense task to be carried out on this earth* (N.93).

This urges us to educate ourselves and other to civic virtue, which could be defined as the capacity of citizens to sacrifice their own interests for the common good, to form strong persons on the level of ethical sensitivity who are, therefore, capable not only of understanding reality, but also of wanting to seek the good of humanity. A citizen formed in this way is not only tolerant and interested in safeguarding his/her own margins of freedom, but is, first of all, a person who knows how to give genuine meaning to the reality in which they find self, and knows how to act in a consequent manner. Frequently, however, this educational and formative task is unexpected especially by one who is at the head of the general public, in the management of political administration, with a consequent growth of a sense of mistrust and lack of interest on the part of the citizens. When one speaks of civic virtue, even if the word “virtue” seems to be outdated,

they refer to a concept that does not stop at the principle of shared value in theoretical terms, but wants to involve the citizen in the experience of civic society without having making an extraordinary hero of them.

All should be in condition to develop one’s own capacity to be at the service of the common good. This is bound to sentiments such as civic courage, civic sense and that of belonging, the capacity to exercise justice and tolerance that model behavior as participation in public life, solidarity toward others, and the exercise of personal and social responsibility.

In every project for active citizenship developed in the form of ethical-civil education the objective must be that of creating a “moral community” with the aim of helping to get to know the other as a person, of esteeming the members of the community and of experiencing the sense of responsibility toward the group to which one belongs. Then, perhaps, what Giuseppe Dossetti, a noted jurist and Italian politician who was a member of the Assembly and later became a priest who participated in Vatican Council II, said in 1945 is still valid: “The only possibility is the prejudicial condition for reconstruction lies precisely in this: that good will on the part of conscientious and honest persons is persuaded that it is not in accord the one’s own advantage to remain absent from political life, therefore leaving an open field for the ruinous experiences of the dishonest adventurers.”

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comunicare



***Information, news and
events from the Media
world***

youngpeople.com

Welcome to Web 2.0

Lucy Roces, Maria Antonia Chinello

The World Wide Web (WWW) as we know it is essentially structured for passive reception. From the early years of the new millennium, multimedia resources(audio, video)landed on the great Network. From that time on, as users and consumers (and frequently hunters!) of information we are potentially in condition to create communication.

The new web is a channel of interactive communication based on contribution, creation and collaboration. A few sectors of *Web 2.0* (as it is known) are already noted. We have written about them more than once in *DMA*. They are words such as *blogs*, *wikis*, *podcasting*, *video/photo sharing...peer to peer* and they are familiar to us. The places of interaction, of meeting or exchange on the Net play a very important role in the daily life of many persons, young people and adults, and also our own. We do not deal with being connected for more time, or of using swift, rapid connections as much as opportunities for finding information, sharing ideas, creating and inventing, and producing content. Possibly that of quality.

Social Networking

On the *Web 2.0* horizon when a site offers utilities such as being able to send mail, to chat, to create personal pages, to open a blog, to set up an album with one's own pictures, to down and upload preferred music and videos...the totality of all these opportunities creates the phenomenon known as *Social Networking Services*, that allow one to connect and communicate with a network of friends spread throughout the different online communities of the planet, of involving oneself in a group with similar interests to extend the circle of our acquaintances. The language of social relationships on the Internet is changing. People are already speaking more and more of "building



a profile", making it "public" or "private; of "leaving comments" or "writing messages", of positioning a friend on the "top" or "bottom" level, of "blocking" or "adding" a person among one's contacts.

The most popular Social Networking online sites are *MySpace*, *Facebook*, *Friendster*, *Habbo*, and *Bebo*. In the United Kingdom, *MySpace* counts approximately 6.5 million visitors, followed by *Bebo* (approximately 4 million and by *Facebook* with 3.2. In the United States the numbers rise. It is sufficient to say that *MySpace* is at the head of the list with 38 million registered users.'

I am here !

Social Networking belongs to those who are "born digital". Children, young people and adolescents are there, connected. They speak and write of themselves, they hide behind *nicknames* and *avatars*, they enjoy changing appearance to assume multiple identities, they reveal themselves and hide among the lines of blogs, the photos on *Facebook*, the videos on *YouTube*. The place of the Net, like their room, is their refuge, the keyboard, the wireless terminal, yet real, nomadic adventures, between the conversation and the viewing of a film, listening to music and commenting on photos, between within and outside of the net, between *online* and *offline*...And the adults?

A bit of curiosity

We know that as educators it is indispensable that we be at the side of young people, with mind, heart, and will and time to spend with them. Frequently with the innovations of the new technologies and the rapid change of the Internet we feel that we have "missed the train", that we have been left behind. The young people speak an unknown language. To close the gap, and reduce the fears and sense of

inferiority, it is enough that we have a pinch of curiosity and the young people become our teachers. The daily encounter, the educational relationship, the word whispered in the ear could set in motion conversations which, from acquaintance could lead us to share more profoundly the values and choices, attitudes and behavior that they assume in using the Net, in the discoveries of sites and information, in the way of establishing awareness and friendship, of sharing content and personal thoughts, in the production and expression of self in the virtual environments. Through the environments and resources of *Social Networking* young people learn to create, to recognize themselves and propose identity and comparison with others for themselves in their own growth. It would be interesting to be able to share in the forum of the Institute (cgfmanet.org) the how and when,

in the different communities of the world, the Internet and the new technologies have supported the mission among and with the young people in educating, in forming in accompanying them in the accompaniment of their growth and maturing, in planning for the future, in communicating, in becoming citizens in their own city and in the world. It would broaden awareness and the experience will become a treasure for others.

Second Life Diary

Here I am again in SL...I decided to interview my friends on the journey on what they think about SNS. *Emila Cornwall*, a retired English teacher who now works for SL, writes on *Eduisland*: “The social network:, she says, “facilitates professional learning in the educating communities. One learns from the experience of others.” Bye, *Emilia*!

I have only a few lines here and for this I must “teleport” myself to another island,

ISTE...here I find *Telos String* and *dgm Ferraris*. *Telos String* teaches art and new technologies in an elementary school. This year he has started a blog, but he hasn't been very lucky. “The young people became bored. They don't put up with connecting with other persons.” *dgm Ferraris*, instead, is a technology coordinator and scholar of Web.2.0. For him, “technology has all the numbers to ‘hook up with’ the students” Bye, friends ! Away toward Cyber techs.

Here we find *Barbara Meads*, a university professor who, uses *SL* and *YouTube* in her “technoliteracies course”, *simulating a virtual class through Blackboard* (I will explain what this is later on.: “The students like the flexibility of an *online* course. They can travel or remain in their PJs and attend lessons. We discuss through Blackboard that is very close to being a blog. They can utilize SL or produce videos for You Tube to exercise themselves and studying content...” RL is calling me and I must return...Do my “dreams in a drawer nourish your own? Till next time, Adelphie

The Point

Profoundly Secular,
profoundly Christian
Palma Lionetti

Among the ins and outs of daily life who knows how many lay persons, known and unknown, passionately consume their “Christian adventure” in the sincere conviction that it is worth the trouble of not abandoning the attempt, even though imperfect, of meeting others along the way, of living and witnessing the joy of the freedom of the children of God, of leaving the world a little better than how they found it.

This is the case of Paolo Giuntella, who died last May 22nd. He was a journalist and writer, rather an “inveterate layperson”, as he defined himself, formed by the Scouts and in Catholic Action. His was a face that was noted on the Italian small screen, and a person who had been followed by the President of the Republic, Giorgio Napolitano. In the introductory pages of his book he wrote of himself: “I feel it my duty to give back the privileges given to me at the ‘court of my father’, but also the privileges that I have received from the encounters I have had along the way. I have accepted as God’s providential design every request, though frequently heavy because of the difficulty of stealing a free day from my work, for conferences or presentations, because they obliged me to read, to think, to seek a way out. And I have become aware that when I sit at my keyboard to write, it is a type of God’s gift. This is because I am forced to leave aside the daily aridity, the worries of a life captured by professional commitments, by intellectual laziness, by the many battles into which I continually insert myself, from the doubts of the secular condition, on which, however, I hold to tenaciously...It seems to me that I am always late, incomplete, superficial, imaginative, but not organic, disorderly. In short, I feel that I betray what my vocation should be, and especially my

intellectual duty, already at risk by my profession that forces me to be quick, to trivialize, and to simplify. While I feel the need for *slowness*. In any case, the writing of my texts is always linked to the desire to communicate to my children, and perhaps even to their friends, my *Christian adventure*...And this is my prayer...the keyboard-yesterday that of the typewriter and today that of the computer-thus becomes the harp for my Psalter, the condition of silence, of the desert in which, cultivating the words, printing their characters, I end up listening within myself, to force myself to listen to God, to think of God, in an exercise of contemplation which, then, however, no texts could succeed in translating.” So it was that Giuntella, the journalist of the cheerful faith, who in a bar, in the marketplace, the post office, loved to start conversations with anyone on anything, in a frank, open, smiling dialogue. He wanted them to be redeemed in the language and life of Christian words such as happiness, and joy. He was a person for whom faith did not count unless it was incarnated; in short, a secular like many others in the world, with the anxiety of transmitting from generation to generation “*that ardent ember*” of faith that he had first received. He was convinced “that when we receive the absolute grace of the resurrection, we do not receive it as subjective, individual salvation, but rather in our human totality... as men and women who have planned, struggled, cried and prayed, in the places of the town squares, in the new centers of learning, in the fraternity and in the companions that life has offered us.”



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Websites of Interest

www.tr2000.it

The official site of the movement *Witnesses to the Resurrected* that started as a meeting place for friends united by one idea and one desire: to live more closely in the reality of daily life the beautiful news of the Resurrection, source of joy and of life. The movement is open to all without limits of age, origin or culture. Those who participate live a particular experience of faith and of friendship, constituting a “family of families” in which they together educate to the culture of life to better work there, where the Lord calls them. It is a secular group of the Salesian family that aims at helping to live the Paschal spirituality.

www.zammerumaskil.com

In Hebrew *Zammerumaskil* means “Sing artfully to the Lord” (Ps 47, 8). It is a Catholic site in Italian French and English managed by Paul Freeman and his wife Francesca and other supportes. It carries out the function of spiritually and culturally forming the faithful and all persons of good will interested in growing in the light of Christ and of the Church on the sea of the Internet. The site projects having a news section and a Catholic press review open to the news that travel the world from ministry, to ethics, to catechesis. There is no lack of content from the world of software. It proposes to re-address more than 700 items of free software of public domain, tested one by one, and has many useful counsels for PC maintenance and the construction of websites.

www.Survival-international.org

Survival is the site of the only worldwide organization committed to supporting the tribal people of every continent through mobilized campaigns of public opinion. Founded in 1969, following the publication by Norman Lewis in the English Sunday Times in which there was the denunciation of the massacres, land thefts and genocides in course in the Brazilian Amazon, *Survival* today has supporters in 82 countries. It works for the rights of tribal people in three complementary directions: sensitizing and mobilizing public opinion, education to diversity and the financing of small, local projects. It works in close contact with the local indigenous organizations, with particular attention toward tribal people who are more at risk and who, usually are those who have most recently come into contact with the outside world.

<http://www.unimondo.org>

One World is a small British communications organization, *One World Broadcasting Trust* (OWBT). Since 1987 it has been operating to spread information on human rights and development through the means of communication, working for the visibility of the inter-relationships between the countries of the North and South. Since January 24, 1995 it has developed *One World Online* with the objective of spreading information via the Internet directed toward NGOs and at a very low cost with respect to traditional means of communication.

Camilla

They with us or us with them?

It was a long time ago (during the first era in which my life unfolded) when a memorable exchange of opinion with a few of my Sisters providentially clarified some ideas, after one of poor capital figures of my life. They spoke of the LAITY in the mission of the Church having a task to carry out. My thought as a young FMA, inexperienced and completely dating back to my novitiate, went instinctively to that quiet and humble little man- at times there were two of them-who swept away the leaves around the entry gate or shoveled snow during the frigid winter mornings before the students arrived. Then the doorkeeper would hand him a cup of hot milk with some small encouragement. I saw him as a “collaborator” in our workdays and that was enough for me.

This episode came back to me as I leafed through newspapers with articles entitled: “The Church mobilizes the laity”; “The laity have an irreplaceable task”; The Holy Father entrusts a commitment to the laity.” They speak of the “lay ministry” that the Church recognizes and appreciates in so far as the laity works to assimilate and spread the teaching of the Magisterium in all fields, even where the clergy cannot intervene.

Thinking again about my inexperienced ingenuity of that far off time, I laughed at myself, amused and I blushed. Now, I told myself, everything is different and even the newly professed who have had advanced studies in the novitiate, know that the apostolate of the laity is not only

a substitute for that of ecclesial and/or religious institutions...they have a vocational identity that today challenges us to an integration of initiatives, proposals and realizations. They with us and us with them, to face the new frontiers of evangelization together, in unity of intention.

As we have seen in the preparation for our General Chapter. In community assemblies, we know, there are no age limits and therefore I, too, had my “active participation”; but especially, I learned. I studied for my future; whether it is here or up there doesn’t really matter, it will certainly in God.

And I really liked the question we asked ourselves: How can we, in our rapport with the laity, be expressions of that all-foreseeing love of which Mary Most Holy is our teacher? I believe that the best response is that which we found in the first Encyclical of our marvelous Pope Benedict. He says that we must be-all those who work for good-“persons moved primarily by the love of Christ, persons whose heart Christ has conquered by His love, reawakening therein the love for our neighbor” (*Deus caritas est*, 33). “Because” he adds, charity is always more than simple activity.” How great and marvelous this is!

Therefore: they with us and us with them, together, to witness to the Truth and to say that God loves us. Let us roll up our sleeves, Sister...This is what *Camilla* tells you.

IN THE NEXT ISSUE

DOSSIER: Dialogue with the religions of the world

CLOSE UP: Arianna's Line Fear of what is different

IN SEARCH OF: Polis the common good

COMMUNICATING Young People. com
Sharing and file exchange



Thoughts

*Love is every movement of our soul
in which it feels to be itself
and to perceive one's own life.
(Hermann Hesse)*

RIGHTS

A child must be protected
against every form of negligence
cruelty of exploitation.

He must not be an object for the marketplace
in any form...

In no case is he to be forced
or authorized to accept an occupation
or a commitment that will harm his health
or his instruction or that places and obstacle
to physical, mental, or moral development.

