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da mihi animas

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Magazine of the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians



It's always time to love

Editor in Chief
Mariagrazia Curti

Editors

Giuseppina Teruggi
Anna Rita Cristaino

Collaborators

Tonny Aldana • Julia Arciniegas • Mara Borsi
Piera Cavaglià • Maria Antonia Chinello
Emilia Di Massimo • Dora Eystenstein
Laura Gaeta • Bruna Grassini
Maria Pia Giudici • Palma Lionetti
Anna Mariani • Cristina Merli
Maria Helena Moreira
Concepción Muñoz • Adriana Nepi
Maria Luisa Nicastro • Louise Passero
Maria Perentaler • Loli Ruiz Perez
Rossella Raspanti
Lucia M. Rocas • Maria Rossi

Translators

French • Anne Marie Baud
Japanese • Japanese Province
English • Louise Passero
Polish • Janina Stankiewicz
Portuguese • Maria Aparecida Nunes
Spanish • Amparo Contreras Álvarez
German • Austrian and German Provinces

3

Editorial
DMA 2009
Giuseppina Teruggi



4 *Dossier*
It is always time to Love

13 *Consecrated Life and...*
Evangelization

11 *Women of the word*
At the school of His Mother

15 *Ecumenism*
A journey of unity

17 *Arianna's Line*
Is it still possible?

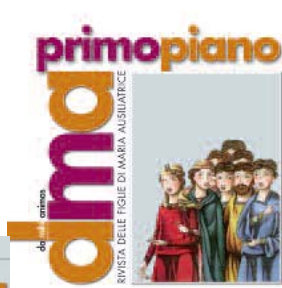
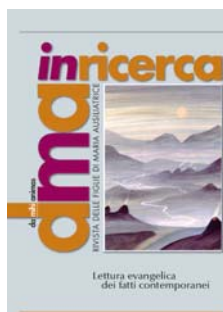
23 *Cooperation and*
Development Little Actions
Against Poverty

25 *Pastoral-ly*
Intus Legere

27 *Polis*
Fear in the world

30 *youngpeople.com*
Generation Y

34 *Camilla*
About the Chapter...





DMA 2009

Personal and community journeys this year are oriented toward the event of the Chapter, defined as *A Cenacle Experience*. The event entrusted to each and every FMA guidelines and perspectives for the future. DMA is on this same wavelength. It will continue to accompany the FMA, laity and young people who want to be involved in the process of assimilation and vital tradition of the content that emerged from GC XXII which took place in Rome. The Chapter members themselves offered interesting proposals to render the Magazine ever more faithful to its nature as a channel of formation. The Editorial staff will certainly take this into account.

A few aspects of the Chapter theme will be studied especially through the *Dossier*. While some articles will be interrupted- *The Lamp*, *The Gospel of Life* and *Photo-click*-; others will continue and there will be new ones. Echoes from the Bishops' Synod, celebrated last October on "The Word of God in the life and mission of the Church", will find expression in the section on *Women in the Word*, with the presentation of figures of biblical women.

Attention to our identity as consecrated women will have a place in the article *Consecrated life and...in meeting actual world situations*. Themes to be dealt with will be: evangelization today, the meeting with culture, service of authority/power, formation, social justice.

The reality of *Ecumenism* will be considered from the point of view of the

Pauline year and will pause on the narration of ecumenical events and on the presentation of the Churches of the East.

A study of the document "Guidelines of the educational mission of the FMA" will be possible in the "*Pastoral-ly*" section in view of a critical reading of the phenomena of the world of youth with attention starting from what has already been said, from what is already known. We want to read with understanding the reality of the world of youth so as to see its challenges and opportunities.

During the Chapter, the text "Cooperation for development" was frequently recalled. To offer further help in this awareness, we have conserved the article *Cooperation and development* with the presentation also of a few projects dealing with micro-credit and micro-economy.

In the *Polis* section we will take our springboard from facts and events that happen to make an analysis of the phenomena, leaving a place for the explanation of some terms.

In *youngpeople.com* this year we will again face themes inherent to the world of youth and to the new technologies.

Arianna's Line, *Websites* will also continue as will *Camilla* and *Video and Books*.

Finally, the *Insert* of each issue will present a story taken from the book "*The Perfect World*", where there are episodes of children who look at the world from their own perspective.

Therefore, have a good year, in company with the DMA Magazine!

Giuseppina Teruggi

dossier

da mihi animas

am

RIVISTA DELLE FIGLIE DI MARIA AUSILIATRICE



È sempre
tempo di amare

It is always time to love

Mara Borsi - Anna Rita Cristaino

It has been a few months now since the General Chapter has concluded and the members have brought to their Provinces the experience of a great encounter of persons witnessing to the all-foreseeing love of God. Now, with the young people and the laity, each FMA is called to re-write the charism in God's today.

A General Chapter is an event that always marks the history of a religious family.

It is an event, from which for those who participated directly and those who followed through the Internet there comes a renewed awareness that the "Salesian charism has in itself a force of communication and contagion so as to efficaciously penetrate the places of poverty in different religious and cultural contexts; it is a way to dialogue and inter-cultural, inter-religious meeting", as *La Madre* reminded us in her comments that closed the Chapter.

God's call to be His sign of love reaches us here and now, in the present time of our history. It is, in fact, a favorable time to revive the flame of fidelity.

John Bosco learned the art of educating by going to the school of Mary, the woman who opens the way that leads to Christ. She is the teacher of wisdom that has accompanied the Salesian Family to being an expression of love for the young throughout the course of history.

In delineating his educational method, Don Bosco said that the practice of the Preventive System is rooted in the words of St. Paul "Charity is benign and patient; it suffers all, but hopes in all and bears with any disturbance (1 Cor 13,4-7). Therefore, only the Christian can successfully apply the Preventive System."

La Madre guided us toward the renewing of the choice of following the Lord Jesus along the ways indicated by Don Bosco and Maria Domenica Mazzarello. "*Da mihi animas; I entrust them to you*", she said, are sacramental words for us, words that require a passion for God becoming a working compassion for the young people. This word of life is our identity, our witness, the light that we want to make resplendent in our educating communities."

In the May 1884 letter from Rome, Don Bosco brought out the scant credibility of a community committed to love but incapable of manifesting it through comprehensible and visible gestures toward the young people, one that struggles to join the management of the works to the charism. Today, like then, the greatest challenge for us as FMA and laity co-responsible in the educational mission remains that of having the younger generations understand that God loves them. Daily life with its wealth and poverty is the space in which to read the signs of love and to become, in turn, our expression of this love. The Salesian spirituality that we live and want to promote holds to the awareness of being immersed in a social reality, one that is worldwide, with many contradictions, but inhabited by God-Love.

It is always time to live; it is time to cultivate the urgency and missionary creativity to bring the proclamation of the Risen Christ to the ends of the world.



Interviews

With Sr. Piera Ruffinatto, professor at the Pontifical Faculty Auxilium, member of the commission for the drawing up of the

Chapter Document. We asked her:
DMA – What is the connecting thread, or the main axis of the Chapter reflection?

The document entrusts to us a synthesis of the Chapter work that presents different levels of reading. In it one can point out an interweaving of outlines that mirror the cultural complexity into which we are immersed, but also the variety of our Institute spread over five continents and questioned by multiple challenges, both internal and external.

Using another metaphor, the Chapter discussions brought out the sound of different notes which slowly found order and harmony; creating a type of “phraseology”, i.e., a central theme in which there was synthesized the “word” of the FMA today, for young people. It was a message that we do not want to have merely written on paper, but

one that is part of life insofar as it is intimately bound to our “being” and “being there”, here and now, as a response of salvation and love for them and for the educating community with which we share joys and struggles in the educational vocation.

The divisions of the Chapter document express a dual movement: on the one side we gratefully and responsibly welcome the gift of the Salesian vocation as a call from the Father to be *sign* and *expression* of His all-foreseeing love among the young people; on the other, we place ourselves in an attitude of docility to the action of the Holy Spirit as in a great Cenacle, and we allow ourselves to be guided by Mary, the mother of Jesus. She will teach us to look at our personal reality, that of our community and of the young people, with the faith that gives stability to the heart and reinforces our trust in the presence of God who conducts the story. With these more limpid and believing eyes we can go beyond appearances to catch the signs of the love of God spread throughout this world, so “dramatic and marvelous” for us as interlocutors in an ever open dialogue. Finally, the Holy Spirit, fire of love, illumines us on the ways that we must courageously and daringly undertake to realize a real, profound conversion to the Love of God, source and fulfillment of all love.

DMA – Which element could guide the educating community to change and improve life and the educational action?

During the Chapter we were reinforced in a conviction: one of the most important signs that makes the love of God visible is the *community*. Love, in fact, is actualized and made present through interpersonal relationships. Conditions for the credibility and efficacy of educative love, then, is the witness of a community that *loves* and *is loved*.

Before an ever more individualistic culture and a society characterized by the “liquidity” of community bonds, we deal with returning to and believing in the community as a place where it is possible to create strong, stable bonds, where one educates to listening and respect, where one esteems and accepts each person with his/her richness and diversity; a community that shares a life project that is fascinating and credible; one that possesses a profound ecclesial sense and is inserted into the territory with a clear identity, one that critically re-elaborates the great actual challenges and is in fruitful dialogue with them.

The journeys of community conversion are born from this and they place themselves in close continuity with the *Guidelines for the educational mission*. If we work together and have the courage to convert ourselves to love, the educating communities will become true workshops in which, each beginning from its own identity, task and role, will live and work in favor of the building up of a new humanism that promotes the culture of life.

DMA – What place do young people have in the Chapter Document?

The young people are the heart, not only of the Document, but of the whole Chapter event and this is because they are the center of our life, the reason for our existing as Daughters of Mary Help of Christians, those to whom we feel sent to bring the message of God's love.

This centrality is well-justified in the Document beginning from different points of view. Rather, they are our first interlocutors. Against the background of numerous and serious challenges that question us, as individuals and as Institute, there stands out a close up of the world of youth with its new languages. We are called to enter into this

universe with the love and educational passion of our Founders. Without the profound harmony with which the young people of today “love”, in fact, there cannot flow even a spark of the friendship and confidence *conditio sine qua non* that will allow us to enter into their world, but even more, into their hearts as bearers of the love and happiness that comes from God.

Secondly, the young people are also a precious “entrustment” for us: our love of predilection for them, in fact, is a gift that we received with our vocation and one that we want to cultivate and help to grow. This allows us to consider the world of youth as a “field” that God Himself entrusts to us so that we, like the wise farmer, know how to cultivate and bring to fruition.

Finally, insofar as they are the “heart and center” of the educating community, they themselves are the protagonists of their life and the architects of their growth. This invokes on our part believing in the “accessible point of good” present in them, of discovering it and of bringing it to light so that it may be developed to the full.



We asked Sr. Maria Maul of the Austrian province to tell us about the experience of working in the editing group.

DMA – As a member of the commission that drafted the final

Document, can you tell us which difficulties you had to face in the drawing up of the Chapter Document?

On August 5, 2008 when I received the invitation to be part of the drafting commission for the final document I did not know what this commitment actually entailed. I said yes because what other response could I have given on this day? I did say that I had no experience either of a General Chapter or of the drawing up of a text with an international team.

Now that I have had this experience, I can say that working together with the other Sisters of the commission, sharing with them the responsibility, the hope, the joys and the struggle of drawing up the final Document was an exciting experience.

Certainly, difficulties were not lacking. The first consisted in the fact that the material to be drawn up came from the individual commissions and the discussions in the Chapter hall on the theme and it was abundant. A large assembly of 193 persons did not always arrive at concrete and precise formulations, and therefore it dealt with reviewing, putting in order, summarizing the rich reflections that unfolded around the outline proposed by the working document.

A second difficulty was communicating that presented a bit of a struggle because of the diversity of our cultures and mentalities, of our languages and contexts. We spent much time in the editing group to clarify words, concepts, ways of understanding the various expressions and content.

Another difficulty was that of finding a suitable form with which to present the content that we wanted to transmit to all the Sisters of the world in a clear, fresh manner.

We wanted a captivating format, one that would mirror the beauty of the Chapter themes: *“Called today to be signs of the all-foreseeing love of God”*, to express, that is, *the beauty of the content in its exterior form*.

I remember a difficult moment on the day in which we were trying to gather the various resonances from the Chapter assembly in the first draft of the Document. We had written it quickly because of the scant time available. We were tired and had to change different parts both with regard to the format, and the content.

At the end, the most difficult reality in accepting this type of work was perhaps that of having to recognize that it was not possible to please everyone completely. The desire to take into account all the sensitivities was always very much alive in the commission, but it was not always possible. For this reason the final text remains, in a certain sense, something that is not perfect, but which, at the end, came to a consensus.

DMA – Which was the part of this experience that gave you the most joy?

Without doubt, it was beautiful to hear the applause in the hall every now and then, especially that final one marking the approval of the Document.

I am really pleased that together we all managed to synthesize ourselves in the concrete expression of what we shared in the

Chapter and what we want to continue to share with our Sisters throughout the world.

However, what gave me most joy was the encounter with the persons, the experience of journeying together. Above all, I rejoiced in the international aspect of our commission. Listening to the Sisters from other countries and continents, hearing them speak of their contexts, truly enriched me, giving me a much better understanding of different situations and sensitivities.

Notwithstanding the patience that we needed to understand one another well, I rejoiced in the wealth of the International aspect, of the differences of the Institute, of which we were able to have a truly unique experience.

It was also very beautiful to hear words of encouragement from so many Sisters, especially during the more exhausting times of the work, and to experience the efficacious help of a few Sisters who, during the second phase of the drawing up of the Document, joined our commission.

The greatest joy for me, however, was feeling that we loved one another and that this benevolence increased precisely during the most difficult times. I experienced that working and struggling together was like a source of friendship among us.

To sum up: I think that the drawing up of the Document could be compared to the birth of a child...the fatigue of the writing would be soon forgotten, but the joy of having contributed to the birth of a text, that is the fruit of the collaboration of all, in a climate that was truly “all-foreseeing love” will remain.

DMA – What would you want to say to the FMA who will read the Document?

I hope that my Sisters throughout the whole world will have the same sentiments that I felt when they will hold in their hands the Acts of GC XXII. I will accept them with much heartfelt gratitude because I will remember the intense journey made together in their drawing up, always in view of the Sisters of the local communities, so that the text, because of its logic and beauty, will be easy to understand and will inspire in them the desire to put them into practice, i.e., to convert themselves to the love of God, which is always new and unending.

For myself, I hope that the Sisters can find in the final Document not only what we have

written *on* love, but what we have drawn up *with* love.

DMA – Is there something else that you would want to emphasize or say?

At the end of the work in the editorial commission for the final Document, the only sentiment is one of gratitude for the possibility of having been able to have this experience.

Being involved in the group drawing up of a text that is meaningful for all of us brought me first of all to appreciate, esteem and love the documents of our Institute much more (for example, the last three: *“Plan of Formation”, Guidelines of the educational mission, Cooperation for development*), because I can imagine in a much clearer way how much work, patience, and dialogue there is on the worldwide level before arriving at a publication that intends to touch life. I feel much gratitude toward the Sisters who have invested so much energy, creativity and love in these documents. But I especially understood something of much importance for my life. Up until now I have always written texts on my own. For the first time I found myself working on a text together with other Sisters from different parts of the world, a text that was not only to mirror my ideas, but to take into account the thoughts and desires of all the Chapter members. I understood that when one desires that something should become life for all the Sisters and communities of the world, then it is necessary that there be a writing that would know how to take in the contribution of all. I remember that beautiful African proverb that echoed often during our Chapter: “If you want to be first, run alone. If you want to go far, walk together.”

The experience of collaborating in the editorial commission of the final Document was for me, like the whole Chapter, truly an experience of the Holy Spirit that “raises up the words, is light to the intellect and an ardent flame in the heart.”

An open Cenacle

The concluding icon is that of an open Cenacle where all, FMA, educating community and young people, are invited to feel that they are a living part, to have an experience of love, to witness.

We live in a world that is ever richer in discoveries and scientific technologies, but looking at our society we discover how poor they are in the wisdom of love.

In this sense we feel questioned especially by the young people. They ask us about the meaning of existence, telling us that they feel the need to be realized as persons, that they seek profound relationships, that they live the experience of the present in a complete way, they ask us to testify to a love that can give happiness and deep meaning to everyday life.

The Cenacle, where they shared Bread and the Word, was a place where the first disciples and Mary experienced the Love of God that was made an eloquent sign in the gift of her only Son. The Cenacle urges us toward an exodus; it invites us to go out from ourselves. Whoever has experienced love cannot hold it in. One cannot keep silent about the love received.

And for this reason the Institute is called to serve life there, where it is more threatened and deprived of meaningful horizons, to manifest in a concrete manner the love of the Father through the witness of every local community.

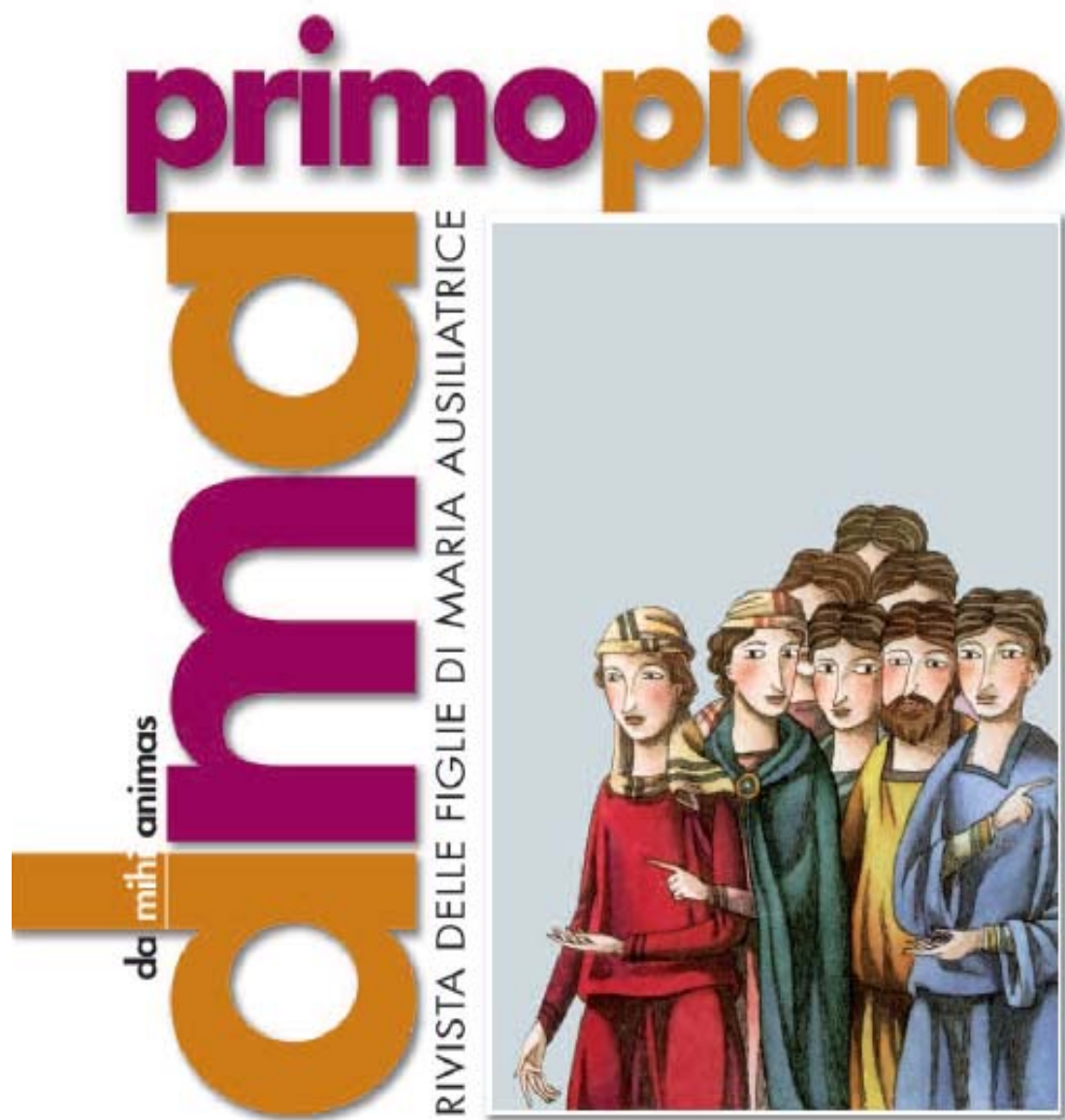
We are to manifest love as an educating community, present among the young people.

“A presence that knows” said *La Madre* in her closing discourse, “that loves, shares, accompanies and witnesses to the beauty and joy of life when one trusts in the Lord, responding to His call and His plans.”

Looking again at the icon of the Cenacle, it suggests to us diverse attitudes, such as prayerful expectation, the missionary enthusiasm, frequent conversation to the Holy Spirit, life shared with Mary, the mother of Jesus, fraternity, friendship, the desire to communicate to all the good news of Christ’s resurrection.”

The introduction to the Chapter Document says: “The commitment to center our life on Love and in love is the journey that will give continuity and depth to the journeys of our educating communities.”

For this reason accompaniment has been chosen as an experience of communion and the style through which to experience communion and to express love. The centrality of Christ, the Spirit of the *Da mihi animas cetera tolle* are essential points on which to base the journeys to be undertaken with a renewed commitment, to be signs and expressions of the all-foreseeing love of God with the young people, and the importance of witnessing to this all-foreseeing love as an educating community.



Biblical, Educational and
Formative Studies



At His mother's School

Elena Bosetti

The Rabbi from Nazareth surprises us, not only for the openness of his teaching, but for the style of freedom that characterizes his rapport with the various social categories, including women, even those marked as being dangerous, foreigners, adulteresses, prostitutes.

Where did Jesus learn this beautiful humanity? First of all, in the family setting, under the guidance of Joseph and especially that of Mary who primarily must have spoken to Him of the God of the Covenant and of fidelity to the house of Israel.

The Word Incarnate learned to pray to the Father with the words His Mother taught Him ; He observed and learned in the same way that every growing child, every boy did. Even during His public life Jesus did not disdain learning from the feminine world. Rather, in some cases we could say that he learned from women.

Mary, teacher in daily life

Luke concludes the so-called infancy Gospel with the note: *"Jesus grew in wisdom, age/stature and in grace before God and men"*(Luke 2, 52). The son of the Most High did not skip the phases of the common evolutionary journey. He lived the processes of growth in all its fullness and complexity, from the physiological, psychological, intellectual, and spiritual points of view. He grew up at the school of Joseph and especially that of Mary. The Jewish woman has an important role in the education of her children, she is called in a certain sense to "knead" the faith

through daily reality. Mary was certainly not exempt from this role. It was primarily at her school that Jesus grew in wisdom and in grace. Before learning from the rituals and liturgical prayer of the synagogue of Nazareth-Luke recalls that Jesus regularly frequented the services on Saturday (cf Luke 4,16)-His heart was formed by the faith lived in the family, in the prayerful listening to the Word and in the loving observance of the law. Nothing is said about how Mary, along with Joseph, raised Jesus. The silence enfolds her relationship with the son of the house of Nazareth. However, at the school of his mother Jesus learned appreciation for women's work, which, at that time brought with it Judaic prescriptions *"grind the flour, prepare the bread, wash clothes, make beds, nurse children, weave wool..."*

(Ketubot, 5, 5). This work required time and struggle . In His teaching Jesus recalled the women who took turns in grinding grain (cf Matt 24,21). Who knows how many times He must have observed and helped His mother who kneaded the flour to make the bread and hid the leaven within. What an enchantment to see the dough that grew and swelled during the night! Was not the kingdom of heaven like this? *"It is like yeast that a woman mixed with three measures of wheat flour, until the whole batch was leavened"* (Matt 13,33).



In the sign of mercy

At the school of His Mother Jesus learned the reality and gusto of life, as He recalled in the parable of the housewife who lit the lantern and swept the house until she found the lost coin (cf Luke 15,8-10). He learned to be in the game of God who overturned the mighty and raised up the humble. He learned justice and mercy. The word "mercy" that is interwoven in the unity of two verses of the *Magnificat* (cf Luke 1,50.54), thus wove, so to say, even the ministry of Jesus, as He appeared at the table of Levi/Matthew, the Publican of Capernaum, where He agitated the Pharisees with the citation from Hosea: "*I desire mercy, not sacrifice*" (Matt 9,13). Luke seems to know this more than the other evangelists because it holds in itself the whole ministry of Jesus between two emblematic banquets, the first, offered by Levi/Matthew, the Publican of Capernaum corresponds to that which preceded the entrance into Jerusalem, in the house of Zaccheus, the little yet great Publican of Jericho (cf Luke 19, 1-10). The mercy of the *Magnificat* was made real in this overturning of situations where the rich (proud and presumptuous) remained empty-handed while the poor (in culture and religious practice) experienced the incomparable joy of a God who, in Jesus, sought them out and found them.

Evangelization today

Consecrated life today is ever more at the service of a new evangelization, and the return to the Word of God meditated and proclaimed opens new paths to revitalize the different charisms of each Institute.

Indifference or hunger for something more?

There are many questions that activate the seeking for new ways to revitalize the charism proper to each Institute before the challenges that today's world offers to consecrated life. How are we to proclaim the Gospel so that it touches the hearts of men and women in this, our secularized and globalized world? Which ways are to be undertaken to reach the young people in their apparent indifference, which almost always holds a profound and unconscious thirst for truth, life and authentic love? These are questions that echo and re-echo, surfacing also in the recent Synod on the Word of God, summed up in a very striking way by the final Message: *"There is, in fact, also in the modern, secularized city, in its plazas and its byways-where there seems to be the victory of Babylon over Jerusalem-a hidden yearning, a seed of hope, a trembling expectation. As we read in the book of the prophet Amos, 'Behold, there will come days in which I will send famine to the country, not a hunger for bread, nor a thirst for water, but one of listening to the word of the Lord' (8,11). This is the hunger to which the evangelizing mission of the Church wants to respond" (n.10).*

A new evangelization ?

Proclaiming God's plan and challenging a society that does not respond, with a critical function matured in listening to the Word and in the contemplation of the face of the Lord in the most disadvantaged, is a common task to all forms of consecrated life. Each of these accentuates an aspect of the mission of Jesus, not only in apostolic work, but also in its very lifestyle. Evangelizing, in fact, is not only transmitting a doctrine, but it also signifies witness to and proclaiming of an experience. Spirituality is not a part of life, but rather all of life. It is a quality that the Spirit impresses on those who live it. Rather, witnessing is, in itself, a way of evangelizing and could be considered as a previous condition for the proclamation of the good news.

C. Maccise, a disalced Carmelite theologian says in his book *One hundred themes of consecrated life (EDB 2007)* that the new evangelization, for which we find an urgent need today, seeks to surpass previous models that had their meaning in the past and still persist in some sectors: the *traditional*, which insists on the presentation of doctrine; the *modern* model that takes into account the doctrine, but in the measure in which it responds to the restlessness of the person and his/her culture; and the *liberator* model by which the proclamation of the Gospel is an event that touches all the dimensions of the person and of society.

How are we to evangelize?

The most interesting contribution of the cited author insofar as it regards our reflection is, perhaps, the presentation of the characteristics of the *new evangelization* beginning from Vita Consecrata.

He considers it to have 3 main points: evangelizing according to Jesus' style, accepting to be evangelized, and evangelizing by creating a community of faith, united in communion, gift of the Spirit.

- *Evangelizing like Jesus* means always beginning, like Him, from the reality of the people. Jesus speaks of vital problems, He illumines them with the good news of the Kingdom; He has a contemplative vision of events: to discover the Father in all; He dialogues, he does not impose, He allows for guidance to the newness of the Spirit.
- The new evangelization *opens so as to be evangelized*. Whoever evangelizes discovers the seed of the Word, present there, where one goes, and this presence of God questions him/her. Prayerful seeking of the ways of the Lord made in a fraternal manner allows for a contemplative vision of reality and has each person take an account of the distance that separates one from arriving to coherently living all of Jesus' teachings.
- Evangelizing implies *creating faith communities* in which there are gathered the fruits of belonging to Jesus: beginning from the proclamation of the good news, one creates communion for the service of the community, always around the Eucharist. These aspects are intimately linked among themselves. Consecrated Life has meaning within the ecclesial community and cannot evangelize without a witness of communion...A realistic, critical communion that knows how to listen and to seek a synthesis in the midst of inevitable tensions.

To the ends of the earth...

The new evangelization requires, furthermore, the prophetic commitment of proclaiming and denouncing, and the enculturation of the Gospel. It requires these things that impose on Consecrated Life moving from the center to the outskirts, of being ever more present in the world of social communications and of being open to the new aeropagus of evangelization to proclaim from there the logic of the Kingdom.

The challenge of ecumenical and inter-religious dialogue also questions us in the sector of evangelization. This is well described in the document *Guidelines of the educational mission of the FMA*: "In an ever-more multi-cultural and multi-faith setting, evangelization invites us to renew our passion for the initial proclamation of the Gospel and for catechesis, for the mission *ad gentes*. We need to start from the Gospel, from the Church as a human community that is a sign and tool of the kingdom of God, and from dialogue with other cultures and religions.

Evangelization promotes educational interventions in keeping with the characteristics of Christianity in dialogue, its commitment to search for peace, the defense of life and of human rights and its work for justice and harmony in society" (n. 49).

We hope that during this Pauline Year we will be able to say with the Apostle to the gentiles: "*For me it is not a source of pride to preach the Gospel; it is a duty. Woe to me if I do not evangelize!*" (1 Cor 9,16).



A JOURNEY OF UNITY

Bruna Grassini

The Church knows how to be seed, to be grain, salt and light of the world...

We must seek the laws of its simplicity, of its clarity,

of its strength, of its authority.

The Church must be ready to sustain dialogue with all people of good will.

No one is extraneous to its heart. Love is our commandment.

The Church dialogues with the world in which it finds itself living, it becomes a message, a conversation. Paul VI "*Ecclesiam Suam*")

Jerusalem. Epiphany 1964. With an intense, fraternal embrace Athenagoras the Patriarch of Constantinople and Pope Paul VI break down the wall of silence that for a thousand years of misunderstanding and hostility have separated Catholics and Orthodox. From this moment on there began a journey of unity of the Church of the future. For the first time a Pontiff visited the land of Jesus. It was January 4, 1964. Pope Montini entered the Basilica of the Holy Sepulcher as a humble, anxious pilgrim; he visited the holy places, walked along the Via Dolorosa in an overflowing crowd struck with wonder, joy, celebration, to the point of being swept away. However, the most intense, emotional moment was that of the embrace with the Patriarch Athenagoras in the headquarters of the Apostolic Delegation.

Only after a certain time did Paul VI confide to Cardinal Tisserant that during the time of the embrace Patriarch Athenagoras had whispered to him: "You are our guide. You call us, you lead us and we will follow you."

One year later, on June 7, 1965, Paul VI and Patriarch Athenagoras revoked the reciprocal excommunication dating from 1054.

Thus began Ecumenical Dialogue: "a fatherly and holy conversation, interrupted because of sin but marvelously taken up again in the course of history" (*Ecclesiam Suam*, 42).

Sharing the Word

Faith tells us that the unity of the Church is not only a future hope; it already exists. Unity, however, has not reached its visible fulfillment in Christians. Its sanctity requires a continual journey of conversion, of renewal.

The lack of unity among Christians is certainly a wound for the Church. It is necessary that each be open to sincerely welcome the action of the Holy Spirit that wants to reunite all mankind as "one sole flock under one sole 'shepherd'".

For this, reason exhorts us to pray intensely for the unity of Christians: "To be like workshops of welcome, awareness, and co-existence."

Twenty years before Vatican Council II Chiara Lubich exhorted us to cultivate "the art of sanctifying ourselves together", to realize a lifestyle of ecclesial life that was new and fraternal: "To help the Church to go enthusiastically toward today's world to bring the living Jesus to all."



The fraternal embrace

Vatican City, October 18, 2008. For the first time in the history of the Church a Pope, Benedict XVI and the Ecumenical Patriarch, His Holiness Bartholomew I met in a fraternal embrace that opened the doors to the Eastern Church.

It was an unprecedented event in history; a true moment of grace, a decisive step along the way to ecumenism. It was the manifestation of the Holy Spirit that operates and guides our sister Church to an ever more profound relationship, toward full communion in the fraternal exchange of the contemplative richness of the Christian East and the impulse to the operative charity of the West. United in God we are called to witness Christ in our time, notwithstanding our inadequacy, faithful to the teaching received from the Apostles, without prejudice of race or culture

The Word prayed, lived, and shared, conquers misunderstanding and divisions. The Gospel of love, forgiveness, and fraternity is a model for all the Churches of the East and the West.

Bishop Gianfranco Ravasi summed up the message proposed by this Synod as “what is most beautiful was born from this assembly. It can be summed up in four symbols: the Voice of the Word: *Revelation*; the Face of the Word: *Jesus Christ*; the House of the Word: *the Church*; the way of the Word: *the Mission*”.

Arianna's Line

Is it still possible?

Maria Rossi

We live in a society of different ethnicities, cultures and religions. Newspapers, magazines, television, websites and perhaps even our own experiences present to us emancipated young people, uncaring of rules, presumptuous, attracted by spectacular events. Phenomena of bullying and xenophobia, the use of drugs, alcohol and other things are multiplied and are spreading.

At times we see young people full of life and enthusiasm, but more frequently there are those who are presented as followers of singers, of leaders who promise happiness, of extremist political movements, and esoteric spiritualists. At the entrances and exits from the schools we see many who are not enthusiastic, but rather aggravated by knapsacks, culture and duty.

Faced by this reality, which luckily is not one of everyone and/or only those like that, the educating community asks itself if it is still possible to educate and what they must do to offer those values so far from those flaunted by the media, but the only ones that can give meaning and to allow for the building of family and community, capable of co-existing in respect and peace.

Given that the young people and also people in general are attracted by extraordinary events that arouse strong emotions, at times we complain and feel guilty because in the oratories, schools and houses of welcome we are not in condition to offer events that are fascinating or spectacular. At times it might seem that even a religious community that does not wake enthusiasm and sensation seems to have exhausted its mission.

Reading the first letter of Paul to the Corinthians-we are in the Pauline Year-could illumine us and guide us toward a possible solution to the problem. Paul of Tarsus writes to the community of Corinth, a community with problems in morality, doctrine and co-existence. After having given them "milk to drink, like newborns in Christ, in Chapter 13 he offers solid, substantial food, proposing a high level of human and Christian maturity.

In that heterogeneous community of different levels of ethnicity, society, religion, and culture in addition to moral laxity and factions, there were some who gave too much importance to the *extraordinary* such as healing and miraculous facts, speaking and interpreting different languages, prophesying, discerning the spirits. People, in fact and young people in particular, are attracted by prodigious events that arouse strong emotions, even if later on these either leave the time in which they are found find or are forced to repeat the experience.

Paul, considering the Christians of Corinth as persons involved in a dynamic process of growth toward full human and Christian maturity, after having brought out the ephemeral aspect of the extraordinary that creates emotions, proposes the daily struggle of charity and love. In the 13th Chapter he enumerates the qualities of love that are also the relationship qualities proper to the adult and psychologically mature person and therefore also those of an educator. One must be able to say of an educator that they are –at least in some degree-

patient. Patience is losing ground today. Even in religious communities one tends to want everything, all and immediately. At times we judge the patient person as one who is weak and not very clever. In reality patience is the virtue of the strong. It is suffering protracted in time, to allow others the possibility of being themselves, to use their own rhythm to arrive at the goal without constraint. It is not an easy characteristic nor one for children;

benign. Benignity is an aspect of loving kindness, a disposition for taking care of people, of helping in a respectful, elegant way, not with the attitude of one who is giving alms. It is the capacity of stopping beside another person, discovering needs, unexpressed desires and hidden wounds. It is also professional closeness, but with a particular touch. In community the one who has this characteristic runs the risk of being exploited, like the one who is patient. However, the one who has reached maturity does not complain, nor does she stop;

not envious. Envy is a great impediment to good relationships. It is stinginess, calculating, and creates divisions and ill-feeling. It is frequently expressed in low-voiced grumbling, so as to avoid the risk of speaking openly. It frequently filters through the suspicious glance of one who controls and condemns gestures of goodness and those attentions that go beyond the calculated measure of justice, of what is equal for all;

does not boast, does not inflate self. Whoever is sure has no need to boast about what she has or does. Insecurity, the fear of impending death could create an anxious preoccupation that leads one to accumulate goods and knowledge (to be puffed up). This is in addition to rendering the person centered on self. It could lead her to feel the weight of prestige that comes from knowledge and possession, to obfuscate the presence of the other person and to humiliate them. The need to glorify self in order to despise others is also the fruit of a presumed justice and envy. Before these adults, young people and those not so young, tend to keep their distance. Only by freeing themselves from fears and considering goods and knowledge as gifts to be shared, does one become capable of serene and constructive relationships that are interpersonal, educational and communitarian;

is not lacking in respect. Respect is a fundamental attitude for interpersonal relationships. One can lack respect in many ways. One of these which is almost ignored is that of loading down the other person with excessive expectations in such a way that they can never satisfy them. It happens in the educational relationship and even in those of the community, with the consequence that the person either explodes or becomes passive. When a person feels accepted and respected even with his/her limitations, it is easier to give the best of self.

does not seek self interest. It is difficult for a relationship to be totally gratuitous. There is always some personal interest involved. What is important is that it be recognized and that one arrives at a certain reciprocity in giving and receiving. At times, and this happens more often between children and parents, one seeks to draw from the other, to the point of emptying them out. In disinterested relationships, the person should be able to feel a duty of corresponding, but also be free not to do it. Not even the most accomplished educator gets a 100% success rate;

does not get angry. In the community there are persons who are exceptionally available and controlled. It is not a spontaneous attitude, but the fruit of choices and of virtue. Generally, however, in the face of inopportune requests and setbacks one tends to fly off the handle. What is important is to become aware, regain control before doing harm and to avoid getting angry for nothing;

does not take into account evil received. Knows how to forgive. In an interpersonal relationship the capacity for overcoming wrongdoings and wounds received requires full human maturity and something more. Forgiveness is the highest gift that a person can give to another. It is not a false pardon or the pretence that all should always go well. In the educational environment and also that of the community, forgiving is offering the possibility for redemption, for starting anew, trying again and not the enabling one to get out of doing something: "Anyway, they'll forgive me."

does not rejoice in injustice and is pleased with truth . The mature adult does not tolerate injustice, but fights it without violence. He/she rejoices when through a network of persuasive relationships, they see the triumph of the truth, especially if this brings with it the recognition of negativity on the part of the one who works in injustice and compromise.

Covers all, believes all, hopes in all, supports all. These four characteristics summarize the characteristics already described and sum up their beauty. **Covers all.** It does not propagate the misdeeds of others, but covers them with a benevolent and prudent silence. **Believes all.** But is not a dupe nor one who is ingenuous. They see betrayal, wrong deeds, subtle machinations, but do not stop at them because they know that whatever they give, be it little or much, will continue to live on and will, sooner or later, blossom. **Hopes in all, supports all.** The mature person knows how to wait even when this brings an exhausting struggle. They know that the good, like life from birth, brings with it a long gestation, has a price to pay. And to support the good and life, it is patient, hopes and supports it even when every hope fails and someone seems to destroy or hinder the good that we struggle to carry out. The characteristics of charity and love are expressed in relationships with our neighbor, with the members of the religious community and with the young people. They are attitudes that are manifested in daily activity, and which, according to Paul of Tarsus and also a healthy psychology, constitute fruitful communities of life. Spectacular events nourish the emotions, and curiosity and could possibly be useful, but if emphasized, they are in the line of being ephemeral.

We live and are for the young people. And though giving priority to the struggle for relationships based on loving kindness, on love, as our Saints have taught us, it is necessary that we give just space also to celebrations, to outings, to diversion, but in the measure in which the extraordinary helps to accept and insert one's self into everyday life to give it heaven and make it fruitful.

To be able to express the characteristics of love in daily life we need to overcome the various phases of human growth. It is of primary importance that there be full acceptance of what one is, and when and of what life offers of good and evil for the development of a positive personal identity that allows us to enter into relationship with others to give life and help it to grow. We deal with a full human maturity in addition to the Christian. If in interpersonal relationships these attitudes prevail, the components of the community will feel at ease and will be able to freely express themselves, feeling well and will not seek the extraordinary to be aware of having meaning. Even in daily life one finds themselves well, because waste, the excess of love perfume life and become the joy of the house, the school and the oratory.

WHAT MUST I DO TO BECOME A SERENE WOMAN?

What must I do to become a serene woman

Dear Diary
You know, I write every day
and tell you the things that happen.
My neighborhood is fairly isolated
and at night there is very little light.
During the evening, the men can take a walk.
My brother Lapo goes to the nearby bar
where he can play games...
He is not afraid of the night.
For us children and for the women, the
evening is forbidden.
There are too many dangers, too many
machines that dart about,
too many strange people around
I would like to have a world
where men and women are equal
with the same rights and duties,
but really that's not the way it is.
Women are paid less
and women's work is always less important
and so they do not lose their jobs, they give
up having children.
Dear Diary,
How can I learn to be a serene woman
without having to give up work and children?

Laura, Florence¹

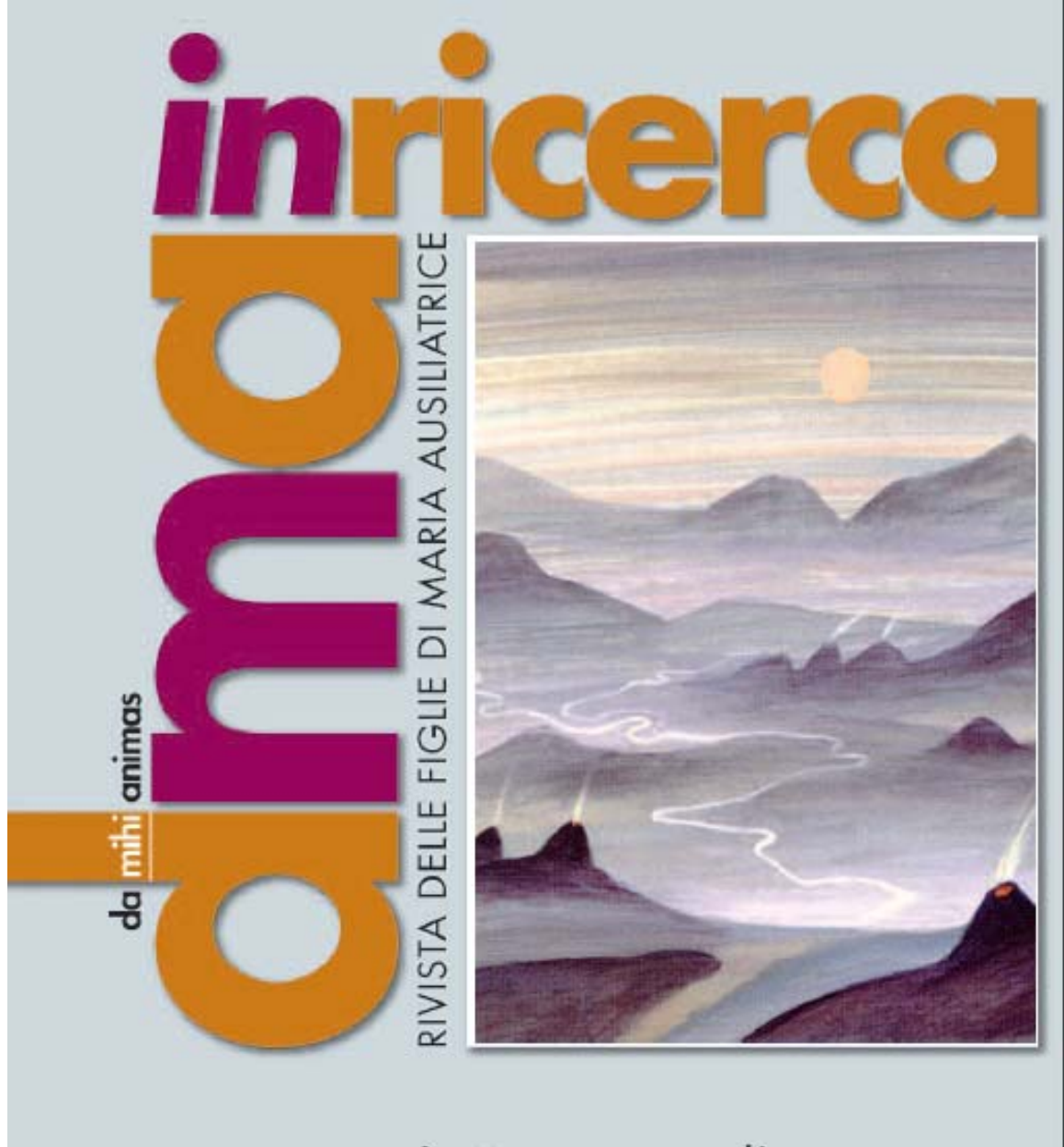
¹ PANSA Francesca, *A Perfect World*, Milano, Sperling & Kupfer 2008, 126-127.

The little girl

They tell us we are special
yet they abuse us culturally.
We are the slaves of the house.
We cook, clean the house,
care for the children.
They do not allow us to go to school.
They use us to placate evil spirits.
They give us in marriage in times of famine
Why girls and not boys?
Parents, you need to change your attitude
Give us equal opportunities
And Prove that you are mistaken.
Parents, if you educate a girl
You educate a nation.
We need our nation to be educated.
*A Poem by 10 year old Sarah, Mureverwi,
Chihota, Zimbabwe*

The relationship between the well-being of girls and the progress of society is a fact that has been ascertained on the world level. The investment in girls, therefore, is considered to be one of the wisest and most profitable among investments. Education empowers girls, offers the awareness and means necessary to improve their lives, those of their families and of the community. According to the World Alimentation Program, for every year of school that girls can attend after the fourth grade, there is a 20% rate of retribution, infant mortality goes down 10%, and the number of family components goes down 20%. Sadly, however, even today, many girls live in situations of every type of exploitation and discrimination.² Of the 121 million children who have never had the possibility of going to school, 65 million (about 54%) are girls. There is no excuse to ignore the fact that the exclusion of girls from the educational system is not only the negation of a human right, but represents a grave mortgaging of the future of society. Feminine instruction brings countless benefits, for the interested subject and for the whole of society.

² Cf WORLD FOOD PROGRAMME, *Educating girls: the wisest investment of all*, in <http://www.wfp.org>, 5.7.08.



*Gospel Reading of
Contemporary Facts*

Cooperation and development

Cooperation Development Small actions against poverty

Mara Borsi

The fiscal austerity that international financial institutions, the World Monetary Fund and the World Bank are pursuing by lending attention to keeping inflation down, has a disastrous effect on the capacity of poor nations to finance public services. Low inflation brings benefits to the multinationals, but affects public spending with a direct influence on the social sector as, for example, on health and education. It is a known fact that it is always the women who suffer the most serious consequences of this situation, in that they do not have access to health care, and it is the children, who remain outside of the schools.

In the present macro-economic scenario we observe a growing impoverishment of women. Taking a chance on them, especially in the poorest contexts, is of vital importance if we want to make the women agents of transformation in society. In the sector of the empowerment of women, micro-financing and micro-credit represent initiatives capable of bring real change not only from an economic point of view but also from the social, cultural and political.

Different approaches

In the area of micro-financing we speak of two principal approaches, the “minimalist” that concentrates

exclusively on the allocating of financial service and the “integrated” that embraces technical support services to the activity carried out by the beneficiaries beyond financial services.

The approach chosen by the Institute is that of the “integrated” that embraces a series of services on the social, cultural, and technical level. Fundamentally, this approach takes in three phases: the analysis of the situation, the constitution of the group and periodic evaluation.

The analysis of the situation studies the context seeking to bring out both problematic aspects and resources. This requires direct knowledge of the life conditions and the best way to improve them. Visits to the families are the priority means in this first phase. In some contexts, especially in rural areas, it is also important to approach the village leaders and the community with the aim of having in them the best allies to sustain the projects.

In the phase of *the constitution of the group*, the women are gathered to offer them a formation in the socio-cultural sector, with literacy programs and those for cultural advancement with the aim of arousing in them self-esteem and the capacity for leadership.

Formation in the work sector embraces a vast gamut that goes from agricultural activities to the raising of animals, from sewing and dressmaking to little businesses (production of bags, soap, candles and other).

On the level of economic-commercial formation, activities are promoted for the learning of accountability, the use of bank accounts, of savings accounts, micro-entrepreneurship, or the capacity for contracting with banks and of all the activities linked to commerce, such as knowing the dynamics of the marketplace, transportation of products

and the contacts for buying and selling. For what regards health formation activities there are proposals for personal hygiene, the care of the domestic environment, healthy alimentation, the awareness of illnesses that can be prevented, alternative medicine, health care, HIV/AIDS. Formation and political sensitivity are guided toward the knowledge of rights, but also to active participation in the political mechanisms on the local level. Spiritual formation is proposed through times of prayer and religious celebrations in dialogue with other religions and cultures.

Once the groups are formed, there is a decision on the criteria for micro-credit projects, the deadlines and conditions for the restitution of credit, the frequency for group encounters.

For the *periodic evaluation*, the group decides on the frequency and takes into consideration the situation for the restitution of credit by group members. The group will become the fundamental place to deal with emergency situations. The group takes measures to offer support and thus create the circle of solidarity. In this way it becomes the fundamental guarantee for the restitution of the credit.

For the greater part, micro-financing is carried out through a rotating fund and this offers the possibility of enlarging the circle to the benefit of a greater number of women. The credit paid back from one is offered to others and this continual investment increases the impact of the fund in changing the lives of more individuals and families.

Candle production in Maputo (Mozambique)

There is a high percentage of unemployment in Maputo, capital of Mozambique, a city facing expansion for commerce and tourism. Many young people on the outskirts are looking for employment so they can survive, but there is none. Sr. Maria Luisa Spitti worked with a group of girls to set up a credit organization of 5000 Euros for the production of candles. This is an article much in demand among the poor because they have no electricity, by tourists for souvenirs and by churches for worship. Imported candles are very expensive in comparison and those produced locally do not respond to the number needed by the market.

So it is that the group believes that they can arrive at being self-supporting in one year. The girls have begun the production of candles for family and domestic use at accessible prices, and also decorative candles with natural products such as flowers and presume with forms typical to the culture, i.e., drums, huts, etc...and these will be offered in tourist marketplaces and finally, there is the production of liturgical candles for churches.

Mara Borsi
mara@cgfma.org

“Intus legere”

Mara Borsi

The article *Pastoral-ly* will attempt to propose a critical reading of some youth phenomena. It is a glance that explores and seeks to move out of the usual places. It is an attempt to read “*outside the words*” those provocations of a youth world that is ever more complex and articulated, to glimpse needs, challenges and opportunities.

Young people in the different contexts are presented like a complex reality that adults and scientific research itself have difficulty in interpreting. Theoretical research actually no longer considers young people as social subjects and defines their condition as “the invisible generation,” the generation without...” Without identity, meaning, values, responsibility, work.

With the rapid and constant development of the new technologies, they are imposing other terms to indicate young people as the *digital generation*, *gen net*, and the *y generation*. They are a generation, this present one, conditioned to contemporarily use more media and communication with a variety of languages from audio to video, to animation created on a computer. It is a liquid generation, continually in motion and with an elusive identity. It is a generation that is ever more predisposed to risk and transgression, with a short memory anchored in the present and with few plans for the future.

We could go on and on, reporting the beliefs of studious authorities and sociological research that attempt to define the twists and turns of a diversified, pluralistic world. The identity traced out by the media makes use of the news capable of capturing the attention of a vast public, reporting especially the evident behavior of young people, violence, and ever more widespread and generalized

dependence on the different contents of drugs and alcohol.

Many adults take refuge in expressions such as *the world has gone crazy, the younger generations have no values...*and on and on. Politically apathetic attitudes don't help anything; rather they are useful for hiding the root of the problems. Let us try to simply reverse the view. Let us look at the world through the eyes of adolescents and young people. What do they read in the adult society? Closeness or abuse, in veiled or explicit forms? A sense of the common good or individualism, or corruption? The primacy of being or of appearing? The uneasiness of the new generations is nothing more than the other side of the coin, a condemnation of the uneasiness of adults.

Seekers for listening

It is very easy for adults to feel that they are sowers; they always have something to say to us young people. Rarely do they feel that they are a “field”, almost as though we young people never have anything to say, but only to learn (Ubaldo, 18 years of age).

Adults never give any importance to our things. Even my Mom and Dad never need me; they make me feel useless. (Raffi, 15 years of age).

In all contexts and in the different cultures the younger generations cry out for a listening ear. Young people everywhere are seeking those who listen, because if one is ready to listen it means that there is someone who is aware and is ready for acceptance.³ Adolescents and young people have a strong need to be recognized, accepted for who they are as persons. They want a personalized relationship, a bond that allows them to overcome solitude and isolation; they want visibility even as a confirmation of their existence.

Through listening the young people have the experience of care. Only in this way can they later be capable of taking care of themselves and others. The experience of caring guides to the perception of a broader horizon of meaning; it opens a space for the act of faith between another person and themselves, and even with the transcendent Other.

In Africa as in Europe, in America as in Australia and Asia, young people are like navigators dispersed in the midst of an ocean, they are looking for a compass to find their route. Contemporary culture offers companions on the journey that furnish topographical maps of the possibilities, but it is silent or incapable of telling of their experiences, to the point of leaving the young people not so much free as alone. In a pluralistic, multicultural society, one that is complex, we all have to face the challenge of identity. It is a challenge that touches young people in particular, those young people who are suspended between nihilism, relativism

and fundamentalism.

What must we do, then, while we are committed to be at the side of the young people and young adults, and those who accompany them on the educational journey, in the times and places in which this becomes possible?

Fundamental for all-consecrated and laity- it means exercising educational responsibility in the awareness that each person carries out a prophetic task. It is a task that is to be faced with a preventive and foreseeing attitude to develop proposals and concrete educational journeys. These are itineraries called to better consider the rapport of the rational dimension with the affective dimension of sentiments and emotions. Keeping present that the alphabet of the emotions has an efficacy not comparable to the alphabet of rationality insofar as it is guided toward creating, inventing, choosing to propose to the young people times to gather than come through expression, participation in spectacles, more than the results, narrative, symbolic, music, theatrical and multidimensional language.

In this way all the initiatives that appreciate the experiences of edu-communication assume significance. Could not this be the way to begin anew to communicate faith in Jesus to the young?

mara@cgmfma.org

³ Cf SECTOR FOR SOCIAL COMMUNICATIONS, *Educommunication. Small steps in the new culture*, Gong 4, Rome, FMA Institute, 8-9 2008.



Fear in the World

Graziella Curti

They speak of planetary fear. People are afraid of the future, afraid of terrorism, and afraid for the environment. Fear of war. Fear of solitude. Fear of human relationships. Fear of one's neighbors and of foreigners. Fear of science. It really seems that fear is the *leitmotif* of the Third Millennium.

There are those who speak of a campaign started by something beyond us...a campaign that began on September 11th and that has become the controlling aim of persons to force them to accept preventive wars, present and future.

Last September the World Social Forum was held in Rome. Participants included sociologists, economists, psychoanalysts, writers and scientists from throughout the world. The theme dealt with was: *Dialogues to combat planetary fears*, and it provided for a way to reflect on these sentiments of extreme insecurity that pervades humanity and the cosmos. It was conducted through a survey of 10 large cities of the world (Rome, Paris, London, Moscow, Cairo, Mumbai, Peking, Tokyo, New York and São Paulo, Brazil). It was noted that the interpretive numbers of our times, the fear of the Third Millennium is the reaction to great global changes, such as the multiplication of risks, real or perceived, the lessening of the level of individual security, exposition to sudden events that could devastate the destiny of the entire hemisphere in a few minutes.

What security?

Fear is like a liquid that one attaches like glue", says Bauman in his *lectio magistralis* at the *World Social Summit* of Rome. "Now we seek protection against those who are clandestine, against potential terrorists and suicide bombers. It makes the State seem

like the agent that knows how to recognize a suicide bomber and has a great opportunity to re-establish its credibility and restore discipline. This shows us that fear is a capital."

The use of fear and of the desire for security has implications not only on the political and social levels, but also on the economic. The annual report of 2003 of *United for a Fair Economy* shows how electoral campaigns are frequently financed by arms producers and, vice versa, and it is daily shown how political dynamics (propaganda, debates, talk-shows, committees, etc) in the conquest of power the theme of security has a dominating role. Speaking again of the *Sipri report*, we have seen how the intervention in armed conflicts nourishes national and international insecurity, the fear of being at the center of possible future attempts or a constant threat in daily life, are strategies that increase military spending in Nations, and as a consequence the products of industries that have a greater part in the economic balance of a Country. There is also a fear that gains an audience. An invasion of unstoppable crime news comes out on TV. A viscous and putrid slime of family violence, agitation, the abuse of defenseless children, of a sick mentality inundates television every day, takes up entire pages of newspapers, is solidly entrenched in the "protected sector" of TV, smothering little TV viewer of every age in the most nefarious, obscure and unmentionable parts of life.

Teachers with guns at school

A district in Texas voted yes to the directive that became law at the opening of the institutions, i.e., teachers are allowed to be armed. In this way the safety of the students would be guaranteed. The parents of the students were satisfied. Not only, but there would be offered to the teachers a course in “crisis control.”

Vittorio Chiari, a Salesian educator has described the phenomenon that generates fear but seeks to point out the main causes and the consequent possible remedies that are very different from meeting violence with violence.

“Violence is called bullying, slaughter, homicides, and brawls. It is found on the front pages of newspapers, in TV images at every hour of the day and night. The politicians gather, journalists fill the pages of newspapers, the experts (the same as always) give sentence, the people, the most simple, honest and laborious, inundated by the sea of written and spoken violence, demand security and levies the most severe punishment, the most rigid controls.

But certain pages of blood would probably not be so frequent if the various local and national TV stations were not “silos” of violence. We complain about young people who do not know how to respect adults and traditions, but how can they possibly do so when each day they witness debates among the deaf, people who are incapable of collaboration to free the Country from the ills of the economy and, even riskier, the lack of ethics, of laws, of norms?”

Patricia's appeal

A young woman, Patricia Cori, wrote in her blog: “Who does not admit that they are afraid of the dark place where the so-called leaders declare themselves to be ‘men of peace’, are leading the entire human species? Who cannot realize the signs of rebellion of the earth against the abuse that has impoverished planetary resources, polluted the oceans and destroyed the great forests, our soul, our source, our vital breath? I say that now is the time to transform this paralyzing narrowness of fear into its highest vibration: vigilant attention and penetrating

instinct. Let us hold to our convictions, while remaining open to those of others, without fear of our commitment to change the world, a world that knows how to be better.

Now is the time to put to the test those areas which have been comfortable and to push beyond the borders. Get up from your chair and slide into the current of awareness where those whom you support are put into action. Reject being manipulated by machines and messengers of power. Make yourself the spokesperson of your resistance, write letters, and become involved. Support all of humanity by participating in peaceful protests and doing something important each day of your life. There is no place for fear. There is no place for anger. Only we can break the chains.”

They have said

We deal with re-connecting the threads of a society where we have lost cohesion among individuals, the putty that keeps them on their feet. A fragmented society is one of fear, in which each person is isolated from the other. (*D. Colmegna*).

In some way we are all fearful-if we allow Christ to enter completely into ourselves, if we open ourselves completely to Him-is there fear that He could carry away something of our life?

Whoever allows Christ to enter loses nothing...Have no fear of Christ! He will take away nothing, but will give all. (*Benedict XVI*).

The absence of fear does not signify arrogance or aggression. This last is, in itself, a sign of fear. The absence of fear presupposes the calm and peace of the soul. Because of this it is necessary to have a lively faith in God. (*Gandhi*).

Our fears are liquid, they attach or detach themselves according to who sells them : politics and economy. (*Zygmunt Barman*).



*Information, News and Novelties
From the world of Media*

Generation Y

Maria Antonia Chinello
Lucy Roces

*Generation Y has burst forth on the planet of young people,
the new "all-virtual" generation,
those who were born digital and their universe is the web.
The young people between 13-29 years of age live on SMS and webcams, they are
assiduous frequenters of online communities such as MySpace and SecondLife,
and role-playing games such as Warcraft.
They never miss a YouTube video.
They have no problems with Skype.
They have a blog as a virtual diary.
and they use curious nicknames instead of their own names...*

These are the Boomers. Millenials. Net Generation. We have arrived at alphabet terms. Sociologists prefer to identify them now as Generation Y so as to distinguish them from Generation X which is that of the adolescents. Generation Y (Gen Y) has passed, and shortly left adolescence, but it is found in a phase of rich and unknown life, in certainty and anguish. Those who belong to this generation were born between 1977 and 1995. They are under 30 years of age, have attended university, have masters' degrees and specializations, they face the world of work but without the certainty that their qualifications will lead them to dignified work, or at least like that of their parents.

From childhood they have been familiar with videogames, they have grown up on the Internet with the social networks of Facebook, and MySpace, with the Ipod and Iphone. IM and SMS and e-mail are their preferred channels for "sending mail." TV, naturally digital TV, serves to capture the latest preferred program and to inset a personal palimpsest to watch on their videophones

Research by Harris Interactive has shown that this generation in the United States alone spends 172 million dollars a year, influencing in great part the decisions for a more adult public, with adults in the lead.

On the Italian front research carried out by the Istituto B&F (from a sampling of 400 young people between the ages of 18-25) has shown that the Internet is the most utilized means of communication in this age group (95%), followed by the radio (70%)

classical TV (64%, MTV music transmissions(29%), Sky (7%). The sites most visited are those of music (43%), followed by soccer (24%), news (20%) journeys and airlines (17%). 42% of the young people questioned say that they send between 10-19 SMS a day and 40% send between 1-9).

Always connected

Which are the characteristics of Generation Y, born in a globalized society where the limits imposed by the categories of time and space are vanishing?

- the facility for travel;
- mastery of the new technologies;
- a positive vision in facing change;
- the capacity for innovation;
- pragmatism and ambition;
- the possibility to access knowledge;
- the facility for learning

We must not, however, think of a generation that is apathetic or deprived of emotions, but rather young people who set themselves as "observers" of social phenomena, to which they adapt and adjust.

Even in the way in which they experience sex and love, for example, they show a profound emotional sense, even though this remains veiled in a multimedia universe. It is as though one could live without the other, like in a videogame where daily reality and the virtual dimension alternate without emotional solutions, even if only in appearance.

These are the children who, more than any other, have experienced the failure of family relationships through the separation or divorce of their parents; the absence of father and mother in the home because of work that is farther and farther from the family. They are rabid consumers, but at the same time are sensitive in becoming involved for human rights and the condemnation of social injustice.

Where do we stand ?

Research conducted by the Anglican Church in 2006 entitled *Making Sense of Generation Y*, questioned young people "seeking to understand" and to assume educational courses and itineraries. The final report revealed that "Young people are happy in their comfortable and accommodating life and they do not feel the need for a transcendent horizon, for entering into dialogue with Another, and note especially that the Church annoys them and is irrelevant to their existence." In this generation there is a low sense of sin, there is no sense of guilt, no fear of death. There is a contrast between the "philosophy" of life of Generation Y-a life that is generally good- and the representation of common sense described also by the media as young people at risk of eating disorders, the use of hallucinogens, of suicide, of bullying and sexual abuse.

They do not appear to be disenchanted, absent from the rest of the world. The significance and meaning of life the Gen-Y resides in the present; the future is short range, everything is restricted to the here and now.

A survey conducted in Australia by Father Michael Mason, a Redemptorist religious (*The Spirit of Generation Y*) says that the young people are not "spiritual seekers" but reveal an approach to life and spirituality that is very individualistic, and they are definitely not attracted by traditional religions. Only a small percentage admitted that they actively practice a religion. Many sustain that all is relative and that there are no rights and duties defined for all

Their great security rests on intimate family relationships and friends. The activities that involve them on a greater scale are listening to music, work and study. They seek a world at peace, one that is secure.

The "other" net

From here which implications can we draw for the meaning and significance among the young people in the Church? How can we dialogue with this generation, how can we be "sing" and "expression" of foreseeing love among them, as GC XXII recently concluded, asked us? How are we to respond to their need for happiness, broadening the horizons and reference points so that they may be as Don Bosco wanted, "happy in time and eternity?"

Journeys for closeness

The celebration of World Youth Day in Sydney last summer brought to the fore the young people of the Pope. Many among them who became pilgrims were young people-at least chronologically-of *Generation Y*. Pope Benedict XVI condemned relativism and apathy, relaunching, instead, the importance of unity and of hope, tracing out a program for spiritual and social renewal, beginning from the young people themselves. It is urgent to create "other" connections day after day. It is indispensable to begin to work with this *Generation Y* in seeking responses to real and relevant questions.

There is a need to be authentic in our presence, to weave dialogues beginning from meaningful themes and interests important for them, to drive them out of their apathy to help them to perceive that they are important and precious because they are bearers of opportunity, of unthought-of- of resources, of hope and of vast horizons. Why not travel in the furrows of their roads, cross their frontiers, go through the lines of their shadows to rediscover them? Why not enter into their "connections", the sites of social networking, Facebook, MySpace, LinkedIn...

Why not change ourselves: 1) becoming good listeners with our heart, putting aside for a second our head ; 2) discussing with them and allowing ourselves to become literate with regard to their processes of communications ; 3) setting aside the schemes of "remote control" to experience participation ; 4) becoming open to change and innovation; 5) learning from experience to work together, to network, building strong and authentic relationships based on the reciprocity of giving and receiving?

We begin a series on *Free and Open Source Software* to discover the other face of the Net, committed to spreading and making accessible the awareness and knowledge, the applications and opportunities, so that the Internet and the new technologies are not the “right” of a few, but resources for many.

The movement known as FOSS (*Free and Open Source Software*) is already functioning in various parts of the world and, according to Julian Fox, SDB, it is “the way for the democracy of information and culture on the Net.”

Understanding the philosophy of *Free and Open Source Software* is not simple in that it deals with two different, though convergent realities. *Free Software*, as defined by Richard Stallman and the *Free Software Foundation (FSF)*, is the program that users may copy, distribute, study, change and freely re-distribute. More precisely, it foresees the freedom to:

1. access the program for any scope;
2. study the program in its parts and adapt it to one's own needs;
3. redistribute the copies and thus help those who have the same need ;
4. experiment with the program and make the results public to the Net comm

If one requests *free* software it is because actually software “is not free”. There is, in fact, *proprietary software* where one has created the program and is the owner. This is the case of programs by Microsoft, Apple, Symantec, etc. Proprietary software may not be modified, it is forbidden to make and distribute copies, it is not possible, above all, to have access to the codes that are at the origin and that allow the program to function.

Free software asks that the programs be free, less costly, without cost if possible. FOSS is a social good that is opposed to the philosophy of *proprietary software*. *Free software* in the developing nations where the cost of acquiring licenses is very high, could signify freedom of access or from cost for the acquisition.

The *free software movement* covers all the program categories: Office,

Office, Archive managers, Internet, P2P, Chat, Security, Network, Servers, Audio, Video, images, 3D, CD/DVD, Codecs, System Utilities, UI Enhancements, Hardware monitoring/Benchmarking, Games, Education, Miscellaneous, Wallpapers.



The site of St. Paul's Abbey is in 5 languages: Italian, English, French Spanish and German. It is a site that is very rich and has as its aim to accompany the "pilgrims" during this jubilee year proclaimed by Benedict XVI on the occasion of the bi-millennium of the birth of St. Paul.

It is possible to download the "General Program" of the Pauline Year to distribute it in any place and to every community: parish, young people, dioceses, etc. The aim of the site is to furnish valid support in the preparation of a spiritual itinerary beginning from the figure of the Apostle Paul.



www.lettereapoline.it

The site www.lettereapoline.it for now is only in Italian with some contributions in English. It intends to offer itself as a place for critical publishing, discussion and study respecting a fair balance between discussion and the possibility of a specialized reflection. It is set up in different sections that represent different ways of approach: **Getting to know Paul:** chronicles, comments and reflections on the apostle, according to a dynamic, progressive journey that accompanies the reader throughout the whole Jubilee Year, the journeys and a systematic presentation of Paul's letters and thoughts according to an historical perspective. **General Documentation:** articles and interventions of specialists, also from the past on themes particularly regarding Paul and his historical-cultural environment. **Pauline Perspective:** presentation of unpublished interviews and conversations with personalities from the cultural, academic and religious world on themes connected to the apostle. **Syllabus of Christianity:** material of a didactic character, informative notes, anthology selections and brief interventions for discussion. **In the image of Paul:** iconographic, artistic, and archeological itineraries +connected to the figure of Paul. **Connections** and resources: "mapping out" resources present on the Internet for the study and research on Paul and Christianity of the early centuries. **Paulus 2.0:** the blog of the site, conceived as a means of historical-religious information, naturally with the possibility for comments from readers.

www.ahrchk.net *Asian Human Rights Commission (AHRC)*. The site is in English with materials in other languages, among which are Italian French and German...of the commission for human rights in Asia. It concentrates its attention on bonds between the judiciary system and human rights, placing in evidence that the obstacles to the judiciary system are economic, social, and cultural civil or political and must be removed if societies want to have human rights.

www.aseansec.org *Association of Southeast Asian Nations*. This is the site of the Association of the southeast Asiatic nations, established in 1967 with the aim of accelerating the economic growth, social progress and cultural development of the interested regions, promoting peace and stability.



About the General Chapter...

I am sure that you, too, find yourself in my situation. The provincials and the delegates to the GC have returned home laden with enthusiasm and material to share with we poor Sisters who remained at home waiting for them.

Books, CDs, DVDs , powerpoints ...it seems to me like a list of anti-flu medications, but all essential things so as to be better able to transmit the Chapter.

Fine, but in reality, I lived it in real time-almost- in the sense that never like this year have there been daily notices on the website, with videos and interviews! My animator was delighted because for two months she had an abundance of material for her good nights!

At this point we knew the introduction that began more or less like this: "Let us continue to follow out Sisters at the Chapter where today they did this...or that..." Every Good Night was an exclusive update from the General Chapter; at least it seemed like it for those of us who were unable to connect directly to the Internet. Just imagine!

Encounters, gatherings celebrations, work, elections, many cultures, many faces.

I, however, had an idea all my own. I'll tell you about it because I know we like one another and at this point you will forgive an overindulgence with regard to this poor Sister "rich in years and experience" (they have no idea of what to invent so as not to say the word "old Age")

The Chapter was, first of all, an occasion to tell us how we wanted to be united as an Institute.

Then for three years in the communities we will seek to bring about in our activities what the Chapter suggested and for three other years we will begin to think about what the next Chapter should tell us.

However, this one had many novelties. We have a French Mother. Actually, we had three Mothers...one at work and two emeritus...i.e., they merit to be called Mother for what they did and gave to the Institute. There is no room for complaint. I have three mothers, 14,000 Sisters, and about a thousand houses. I can almost sleep peacefully, but you know, at my age one especially wants to be surrounded by grandchildren. Girls and boys and, why not, even young FMA.

And then there are the new council members...from many different countries and with names that I will need the next six years to learn!

Who knows if I will still be around for the next chapter...there are already so many years...but I really hope that during these left to me I will see become real the Spirit of Pentecost that has been cited so many times...at least by my animator.

In the next issue...

DOSSIER

Open Cenacle

House of doubts and dreams

CLOSE UP

Women of the Word

Women of Christ's Passion

COMMUNICATING

youngpeople.com

Wii and Videogames



Winning Photo in the Photo Click contest

Friendship at any age

*Nicole Ann F. Galang Balibago
Angels City
Pampanga*

THE WORD OF GOD

*Then the Lord spoke to you from the midst of the fire.
You heard the sound of the words, but saw no form;
there was only a voice*

(Deut 4, 12)

