



The Holy See

**LETTER OF JOHN PAUL II
TO CHIARA LUBICH,
FOUNDRRESS OF THE FOCOLARE MOVEMENT**

To Miss Chiara Lubich President of the Work of Mary (Focolare Movement)

1. With joy and affection I address my cordial greeting to you and to the participants in the General Assembly of the Work of Mary taking place at Castel Gandolfo. I thank you for the good wishes you sent me for today's observance, which marks the beginning of the 25th year of my ministry in the See of Peter. I have always felt the spiritual closeness of the members of the Focolare Movement, and have admired their positive apostolic action in the Church and in the world.

I especially appreciate the Work of Mary for the valid contribution it offers in pursuing its specific goal, that is, the promotion of communion through the quest for and practice of dialogue, both within the Catholic Church, with the other Churches and ecclesial communities, and with the different religions and with non-believers.

2. While in these days you are verifying and planning the life and activity of the Movement, I am pleased to renew my expression of esteem and gratitude for the apostolate you carry out and for the manifold initiatives you promote to make the Church become ever more "the home and the school of communion" (Apostolic Letter *Novo Millennio ineunte*, n. 43).

You are conscious - as your work constantly takes into account - that concrete action must be preceded and animated by a robust spirituality of communion, as an educational principle everywhere the person and the Christian are formed (cf. *ibid.*, n. 43). In this regard, I think of the many branches of the Focolare Movement: children, young people, families, priests and religious. I think of your presence in the parochial and diocesan communities, and at the heart of society and culture. I thank you, dear friends, and I encourage you to continue witnessing everywhere to the Triune God of Love, who shines forth in Christ and in his Church.

3. Make ever deeper the special spiritual bond that unites you to the Blessed Virgin Mary: indeed your Work is dedicated to her. Cultivate a faithful devotion to the Virgin Mother of the one, holy Church, Mother of unity in love.

On this special occasion, present in spirit, I would like to entrust to the Focolare the prayer of the Rosary, which I wanted to offer again to the whole Church as a rich means for contemplating and assimilating the mystery of Christ. I am certain that in your devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary you will give the necessary emphasis to the initiative of a year dedicated to the Rosary. Make your own contribution so that these months may become for every Christian community an occasion of interior renewal.

4. The Year of the Rosary will be for you a stimulus to intensify the contemplation of Christ with the eyes of Mary, to conform yourselves to him and to radiate his salutary presence in your habitual contexts. In a special way, I know I can entrust to your prayers the mystery of Jesus crucified and abandoned as a way of contributing to the realization of his supreme desire of unity among all his disciples.

Relying on your constant remembrance of the Successor of Peter in your prayer, I assure you of my prayers and, with my best wishes for the successful outcome of your assembly, I gladly impart my Apostolic Blessing to each of you and to the entire Movement.

From the Vatican, 16 October 2002

IOANNES PAULUS II