

Amman, December 7, 1999

At the dawn of the new millennium

In December 1999 Chiara Lubich was in Amman, Jordan, where she met a small but lively group of people forming the Focolare community there. The new millennium was awaited with both hope and fear. What follows is Chiara's answer to New Stadt magazine to the question "What is your vision for the new millennium?"

Q. What is your vision for the new millennium?

A. I don't have a vision for the next millennium. I cannot have one because I am not a prophet. But I have a great deal of hope in my heart. Undoubtedly, this is an effect of the charism which the Holy Spirit has put there for the benefit of many. I see in the Work of Mary, the Focolare Movement, such a vast, universal and impressive work of the Holy Spirit that I cannot fail to be truly optimistic about the future.

Seeing what the Holy Spirit has done with us and with many other spiritual and social "enterprises" that are at work the Church today, I cannot but hope that He will continue to act now and always with the same generosity and magnanimity.

And this holds true not only for brand new works that will arise from his love, but also for the development of those that already exist, like our own.

Meanwhile, I dream that the atmosphere in our Church will be more suited to her identity as the Bride of Christ; a Church which can be seen by the world as being more beautiful, more one, more holy, more charismatic, more akin to Christ her Spouse. I dream of her being a beacon for humanity. And I dream of seeing in her a holiness of the people never seen before.

I dream that the growing awareness of living as one family, which we see today in the consciences of millions of people, will be practised ever more widely across the globe, so that in the third millennium it will be a general, universal reality.

That is why I dream that wars, conflicts, hunger and the thousand other evils in the world will diminish.

I dream of an ever more intense dialogue of love among the Churches so that the formation of one Church is seen to be close at hand.

I dream of a more living and active dialogue among people of the most varied religions linked to one another by love, by "the Golden Rule" present in all their sacred texts.

I dream that the various cultures in the world will mutually enrich each other and draw closer to one another so they give rise to a world culture which highlights those values which have always been the true wealth of individual peoples, and I dream these values will be seen by all as global wisdom.

I dream that the Holy Spirit will continue to enrich the Churches and strengthen the "seeds of the Word" beyond them, so that the world may continually receive new light, life, and works which He alone can be able to give. So that ever-greater numbers of men and women may set out towards straight paths,

converge on their Creator, and put their hearts and souls at his disposal.

I dream of Gospel-based relationships not only among individuals, but also among groups, movements, religious and lay associations; among peoples and among States, so that it becomes logical to love other people's countries as our own; and logical to tend towards a universal communion of goods, at least as a goal to reach.

I dream of a united world in which the variety of peoples all recognise one another in the alternation of one sole authority.

So I dream of already witnessing new heavens and a new earth, as far as this is possible here on earth. I am dreaming of many things, but we have a millennium to see them come true.”