

(English translation)

Rocca di Papa, 19 August 1984

Speech of John Paul II at the Mariapolis Centre
(in the open)

I must thank you all, I thank you for this extraordinary meeting. (Applause)

It was something extraordinary (he laughs) coming here from Castel Gandolfo because I thought: the focolarini are not coming to Castel Gandolfo, I must go to them! (Applause)

So I thank you for this meeting which is extraordinary also in content. I have been able to visit your centre, your Mariapolis Centre, which embraces all the focolares of the world. I've been able to talk with Chiara and with her collaborators in this Centre. ... Then there was an artistic testimony in which one could see how that love that is at the heart of your Movement knows how to animate all human values, the value of beauty, the value of art, which are always destined to express all that is deep within the human being, all that is most spiritual, which is human and I would say also divine With this meeting I've been able to get a little closer to what makes up the charism which is proper to your Movement, or, I could put it differently, I've been able to understand better how love, love which is the gift of the Holy Spirit, is the expression of the human spirit, its virtue, its virtue, its greatest virtue, and how that love constitutes the charism itself and the specific aim of your Movement.

It is good that you have found such a way, this vocation of love, it is good. Listening to the testimonies I have become even more strongly convinced of what for many years and every day I realise, that is, that in the world today, hatred and conflict, in the life of nations, society, environments and of people, are very strong and they are programmatic. ... Therefore, love is stronger, love is stronger than all of that and this is your faith, the spark that inspires all that is done under the name of 'focolare', all that you are, all that you do and bring about in the world. Love is stronger. It's an revolution. ... This is also the radicalism of love. In the Church's history there have been many radicalisms of love, almost all contained in the supreme radicalism of Jesus Christ. There were many types of radicalisms of love, of many saints: the radicalism of St. Francis, another one of St. Ignatius of Loyola, of Charles de Foucauld and many others up to our days. There is also your radicalism of love, of Chiara, of the focolarini: a radicalism that discovers the depth of love and its simplicity, all the needs of love in all the different situations, and tries to make this love always win over in diverse situations, in every circumstance, We can say that your work of evangelization begins from love in order to reach God. Often people begin from God in order to, perhaps, reach love. You have found this wonderful formula, like St. John's formula: "God is love." ...

So I wish that you keep going on this same road. You already have a direction. ...

I see that you authentically follow that vision of the Church, that self-definition that the Church gave to itself during the Second Vatican Council.

This is how I see your contacts, very fruitful in the ecumenical sphere, with our brothers and sisters who are not Christian, of other religions, who have their own religious riches ... and then the contacts with the secularized world, with non-believers, with atheists and agnostics. ...

Love opens the way. My wish is that this way, thanks to you, may always be more open for the Church. And having said all this I think I don't have to add anything more! (Applause)

... So I say to you, as God the Creator said on the day He created man and woman: "Increase and multiply".

May Jesus Christ be praised!